THE HISTORY OF AGATHON.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

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THE HISTORY OF AGATHON,

By Mr. C. M. WIELAND.

Tranſlated from the GERMAN Original,

WITH

A PREFACE BY THE TRANSLATOR.

——Quid Virtus & quid Sapientia poſſit
Utile propoſuit nobis exemplar ——

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THE TRANSLATOR's PREFACE.

A Famous Cardinal † of the laſt age, ſpeaking of the learned Jeſuit GRETSER, obſerves with ſome degree of ſurpriſe, that, conſidering he was a German he had a great deal of wit. A thought, which a lively Frenchman, improving perhaps upon the original idea, has carried ſo far, as to make it even a queſtion, whether it be poſſible for a German to be a man of wit. There may be ſomething ambiguous in this term, eſpecially as uſed by the French; but to ſet aſide equivocal diſtinctions, it is certain that at ſeveral periods ſince the revival of letters, Germany has produced men of great abilities. They have particularly diſtinguiſhed themſelves in natural hiſtory, chymiſtry, and philological learning. Many of their earlier productions in theſe parts of ſcience may be ſtill read with pleaſure and improvement.

† See Perron. Art. *Greiſer*, p. 272.

ment. But the preſent æra may be conſidered as a very extraordinary one with reſpect to German literature, and may juſtly boaſt of ſeveral able criticks, philoſophers and divines. Thoſe of the preſent age are ſuch as would do honour to any country. I need only mention the celebrated names of HALLER, ERNESTI, CRAMER, KLOTZ, SEMLER, MENDELSSOHN, to confirm the truth of this obſervation. Candour will not ſuffer me to omit the learned Dr. REISKE, Profeſſor at *Leipſic*, though we in particular have little obligations to that gentlemen, on account of the ſingular manner in which he treats our critical writers, and the cenſure he paſſes upon their Latin ſtile, in his late edition of *Demoſthenes*; a liberty, which in our opinion, he is leſs entitled to make uſe of, than many others of his countrymen.

In theſe branches of critical and philological erudition, the learned MOSHEIM deſerves our warmeſt encomiums. His works abound in much critical learning, diſcover a ſound judgment and great penetration, are written in a clear, correct, and pleaſing ſtile; and with an amiable candour and impartiality. In GESNER too, though his

his writings are chiefly in the Latin language, we ſhall find all the talents of a judicious and elegant critic. To him we are indebted for ſeveral very valuable editions of the Claſſics. The obſervations he has occaſionally ſubjoined are not filled with trite grammatical niceties, or with a detail of an almoſt endleſs variety of ſimilar and often unneceſſary paſſages: on the contrary, they are conciſe, clear and pertinent, the ſimilar paſſages few, and generally well choſen, the difficult parts frequently cleared up, and the peculiar beauties of the author pointed out with judgment and propriety.

The celebrated Dr. MICHAELIS Profeſſeſſor at the Univerſity of *Gottingen*, has choſen a leſs frequented path, in which he hath made a very extraordinary progreſs. A ſuperior degree of penetration, and a very extenſive knowledge of the oriental languages, equally diſtinguiſh this ingenious critic. His works deſerve to be read by all who have any taſte for ſacred literature, as they throw great light upon the phraſeology of the inſpired writers, and ſerve to illuſtrate many obſcure and difficult paſſages in them.

But the greateſt improvement made by the Germans of the preſent century, is, in the cultivation of their own language. The pains that have been taken by ſeveral eminent men among them to poliſh and refine it, have already rendered it well deſerving the attention of the man of genius, as well as of the ſcholar. The influence theſe improvements have had on the general taſte, and progreſs in the politer parts of literature, is by no means inconſiderable. Hence their poetry has undergone a very ſtriking change, and we may diſcover in ſeveral of their later compoſitions, proofs of original genius, and great ſublimity of conception and imagination. Their ſtage, though very imperfect ſome years ago, has been of late entirely new modelled, and a more correct and regular plan adopted by their moſt eſteemed writers: Some of the pieces of a Lessing, and a Weiss, would command applauſe from the politeſt Britiſh audience.

The refinement of the language has been owing in a great meaſure to the labours of the late ingenious Mr. Gellert, Profeſſor at *Leipſic*, whoſe works have contributed

buted to introduce a more claſſic and correct manner of writing among his countrymen. This pleaſing writer is no leſs remarkable for his elegant ſimplicity of language, than for the ſoundneſs of his judgment, and the purity of his taſte. His works contain a variety of excellent and uſeful obſervations, drawn from a general knowledge of life and manners, and glowing with the warmeſt ſentiments of humanity and unaffected benevolence. The heart of the writer breathes that ſpirit of virtue which animated all his actions. His compoſitions in verſe, though ſeveral of them are of the lighter kind, are far from being deficient in poetical merit, and in many parts diſcover marks of original genius. His diction is peculiarly correct and expreſſive, totally free from that affected obſcurity and laboured pomp of language, aiming, (to uſe an expreſſion of Lord SHAFTESBURY) *at falſe ſublime, with crouded ſimile and mixed metaphor*, (*the hobby-horſe and rattle of the Muſes*) which diſtinguiſh ſome of his cotemporary poets. The death of this excellent man, which happened a few years ago, hath given riſe to ſeveral

pieces both in proſe and verſe, publiſhed either by his friends or pupils. In theſe they have endeavoured with equal zeal and affection to perpetuate the memory of his ſuperior abilities and diſtinguiſhed virtues. A taſk, which though meritorious as a ſacrifice to gratitude, reſpect and affection, is much better performed by the works he has left behind him. The Germans yet ſpeak of him with a kind of enthuſiaſm; and the learned Mr. ABBT, in a ſenſible treatiſe on merit, beſtows on his writings an elogium the more flattering, as it cannot be ſuſpected of partiality. "His works, "he ſays, are read, underſtood, and admired "by all his countrymen; they inſtruct the "moſt ignorant, and pleaſe the moſt inge-"nious and enlightened."

SUCH are the men whoſe learning and abilities have been ſlighted by their neighbours, and who have been ſo illiberally treated as to be conſidered only a few years ago, as a *particular ſpecies of Automata calculated to vegetate under electoral Powers.* †

BUT

† Il y a trente ans que la Poëſie Allemande étoit l'objet de nos plaiſanteries & de nos dédains

BUT in whatever unfavourable light a German might appear to a Cardinal or a Jeſuit, and in general to the whole body of the French nation, I flatter myſelf that we have not adopted their prejudices. I am the more ſanguine in this opinion, for two reaſons: the one, that a highly celebrated writer among them, who for many years was their ſole arbiter in matters of taſte, has in ſeveral of his pieces treated the Engliſh with very little more reſpect, though in the former part of his life, he had no ſmall obligations to them; the other is, the Germans of the preſent times ſeem in a great meaſure to have formed themſelves on Engliſh models, and have, therefore, a particular claim to protection and encouragement from us. Moſt of our approved writers have been tranſlated into their language, been read, admired, and ſpoken of by their ableſt and moſt eſteemed authors with great applauſe:

dains. Nous regardions les Allemands comme des eſpéces d'automates, faits pour végéter ſous des puiſſance électorales. D'un Ouvrage lourd & mal fait, on diſoit que c'étoit un écrit Germanique, & l'on ne prenoit point la peine d'examiner, ſi l'on avoit tort ou raiſon.

DORAT *Recueil de Contes.*

and though a German SHAKESPEAR, MILTON, POPE, ADDISON or HUME, may poſſibly, ſound ſtrange to an Engliſh ear, yet 'tis well known, that theſe ſeveral writers have been tranſlated by ſome very ingenious men, with a ſurprizing degree of accuracy and elegance. Natural partiality for our own country, cannot but ſtrongly inforce this plea in their favour, as it will reflect ſome degree of merit upon our own writers, who may very reaſonably be ſuppoſed to have contributed to introduce a more chaſte and correct manner of writing among our neighbours. It muſt afford too an agreeable proſpect to an Engliſhman, to ſee the beauties of his moſt favourite writers flouriſhing in a ſoil, which has hitherto been thought ſo improper and unfavourable, for their cultivation and improvement.

THE compoſition of Novels and Romances, that for ſome years paſt has become ſo faſhionable, has been attempted but very lately with any degree of ſucceſs among the Germans. They have contented themſelves with the tranſlations of FIELDING, RICHARDSON, and a few of our beſt authors in this way. There is, indeed, in GELLERT's works, a ſmall

piece

piece of the novel kind, entitled the *Swediſh Counteſs*, which is written with much elegance, and was greatly admired, when firſt publiſhed in Germany. Some parts of it abound with true pathos and well imagined ſcenes of affecting diſtreſs: but the incidents and characters are not, perhaps, ſufficiently diverſified, the moral reflections are tedious, and he ſeems rather unfortunate in his attempts at humour. RABENER, who is ſtiled the German SWIFT, in his ſatires and ſome parts of his works, may perhaps, be conſidered as another of their novel writers; but the true and lively ſtrokes of wit and pleaſantry, that abound in this entertaining author, being often of a local nature, and alluding to cuſtoms we are little acquainted with, are therefore leſs intereſting to an Engliſh reader, and loſe much of that ſtrong and pointed ſatire for which they are ſo remarkable in the original. His ſatires have indeed appeared in an Engliſh dreſs, but in ſo looſe and negligent a one, that the author, were he now living, and could read and underſtand his tranſlator, would have ſome difficulty to know himſelf under this diſguiſe. Theſe perhaps, are the true rea-

ſons, why he is ſo little read amongſt us, and has not met with that applauſe which the ſuperiority of his genius ſo deſervedly claims. The Germans, however, conſider him as one of their moſt original writers, and the editor of a volume of his letters collected by himſelf, but publiſhed after his death, gives us the following encomium of him. "In him, "ſaith he, Germany has loſt one of her "beſt writers, his country a true patriot "and a valuable citizen, his prince a moſt "faithful ſervant, and his acquaintance an "honeſt and generous friend."

THE learned and ingenious Mr. WIELAND, author of the following work, has been well known for ſome time paſt in the literary world, as a man of genius and erudition. He has diſtinguiſhed himſelf as a poet, as a ſatyriſt, as a moral, and as a dramatic writer. Though the ſingularity of ſome of his productions has expoſed him to the ſevere cenſure of the German critics; yet his writings in general have been well received by moſt of his countrymen.

THE hiſtory of *Agathon* is conſidered as his maſter-piece; and indeed he diſcovers throughout the whole of this work much original

original genius, and very extenſive reading of modern as well as antient writers. In the firſt volume we ſhall find a learned and curious account of the Sophiſts of Greece, which ſeems conformable to what we read of them in the dialogues of *Plato* and *Lucian*. There is much good metaphyſical reaſoning in the conferences between *Hippias* and *Agathon*; and though it has been juſtly imputed to the writers of controverſial dialogues, that they are cautious of repreſenting in their full force the arguments they mean to refute, yet Mr. WIELAND has been particularly attentive not to incur this cenſure. The arguments the ſophiſt *Hippias* uſes in ſupport of his ſyſtem, appear to be ſet in their ſtrongeſt light, ſo that it may ſometimes be a matter of doubt, whether the reply is ſufficiently convincing. In general however, *Agathon* has the beſt of the diſpute; and if even there ſhould be room to doubt, it may be owen to the author's accuracy in endeavouring to make the anſwers conſiſtent with his Hero's character, which in his younger days was that of an enthuſiaſt.

THE behaviour of *Agathon* at *Athens* in the ſecond volume is remarkably ſtriking;

and the deſcription of the manners and diſpoſition of that Republic very juſt and entertaining. The account of the court of *Dionyſius* is extremely pleaſing; and the court-intrigues are diſplayed with a degree of penetration and ſagacity, which indicate a thorough knowledge of the human heart. The extracts from *Agathon*'s ſpeech in favour of a monarchical government, are maſter-pieces of elegance as well as of ſound reaſoning. Theſe parts of the work are ſo excellent that they may be read with pleaſure, perhaps with advantage; by ſtateſmen and politicians.

THE character of *Archytas* in the laſt volume is highly finiſhed; and may be looked upon as one of the moſt amiable and conſiſtent characters ever drawn.

BUT it would be endleſs to particularize all the beauties of this work. Let it ſuffice to ſay, that Mr. WIELAND's ſtile is nervous and ſtrong, his deſcriptions poetical and pictureſque, though on ſome occaſions they may be too wild. His reaſoning upon the whole is juſt, and in many parts we meet with that noble ſimplicity, which is the charac-

characteriſtic mark of the antient manner of writing, and the teſt of true genius.

Among ſuch a variety of excellencies, we could wiſh there were no blemiſhes of conſequence to be found, eſpecially as thoſe which do occur might have been ſo eaſily avoided. We muſt do the author the juſtice to declare, that theſe faults ſeem chiefly to have ariſen from hurry and want of attention, evident marks of which manifeſt themſelves in this otherwiſe ſuperior and capital performance.

A vein of pointed ſatire runs through the whole work; and though it is often judiciouſly applied, and with much wit, particularly againſt modern writers of novels and romances, yet it ſeems to be ſo much the author's favourite turn, that three or four different ſtrokes of it are frequently complicated and thrown together in the ſame ſentence. This unavoidably creates confuſion and periods of an immoderate length, a defect, which we have taken the liberty to correct as much as poſſible in the tranſlation.

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Although the ſtory is profeſſedly borrowed from a Greek manuſcript, yet there are many alluſions in it to modern cuſtoms, manners and writings which take off in a great meaſure from the antique caſt that ought to have been uniformly preſerved through the whole. The author indeed apologizes for theſe in the preface; but the neceſſity of ſuch an apology had better been avoided; for we apprehend that he either wiſhed to ſave himſelf the trouble of correcting thoſe paſſages, or that his turn for ſatire induced him rather to leſſen the dignity of his ſubject, than to omit any opportunity of indulging this propenſity.

THERE is alſo a careleſſneſs in ſome of Mr. WIELAND's expreſſions, and an indelicacy in ſome of his alluſions which we ſhould not have expected in ſo elegant a writer. The affectation of low humour is too prevalent, and the various apoſtrophes of *Sir*, *Sirs*, *my charming ladies*, &c. though agreeable in ſo deſultory and miſcellaneous a writer, as the author of *Triſtram Shandy*, ſeem little ſuited to the importance of this work.

WE

We could alſo wiſh that as Mr. Wieland's is upon the whole a moral work, he had in ſome places checked the ſallies of his imagination; which hath led him to give too alluring a picture of the moſt ſeducing, though indeed the moſt excuſable of all human foibles; and to repreſent ſome reſpectable virtues in too ludicrous a light.

These are ſpots which would ſcarcely be noticed in an inferior writer; but they are the more conſpicuous in Mr. Wieland, from their contraſt to the extraordinary brilliancy of other parts. In a ſecond edition, it is probable he will correct ſome things, and improve others.

As to the tranſlation we now offer to the Public, we ſhall only ſay, that it has been made as cloſe as poſſible. Some of the metaphors, though ſingular and foreign to the idiom of our language, we have rather choſen literally to retain, than to run the riſque of weakening the force of the original meaning. It will, we believe, be allowed by thoſe who are acquainted with the German language, that the general difficulty of tranſlating works of fancy with propriety and elegance, has been more conſiderable in this

this particular inſtance. We ſhall not, however, regret the pains we have taken, if our readers can peruſe this tranſlation with pleaſure and ſatisfaction, and if it can but give them ſome idea of the excellent Original.

THE

THE AUTHOR's PREFACE.

THE Editor of this Hiſtory ſees ſo little probability of being able to perſuade the public, that it was really taken from an old Greek manuſcript, that he thinks it beſt to be ſilent on this point, and to leave the reader entirely at liberty to think as he pleaſes.

FOR admitting that there really was an *Agathon*, as it is well known to thoſe who are converſant with *Plato's* writings, that there certainly was a comic poet of that name, at the æra of this hiſtory; admitting alſo that nothing of more conſequence had been tranſmitted to us of this *Agathon* than the time of his birth and marriage, the number of his children, and when and of what diſorder he died; what could induce any one from ſuch anecdotes as theſe, to read his hiſtory, even though it could inconteſtibly be proved, that it had been found among the records of ancient *Athens*?

THE

THE truth, indeed, of a work of this kind, which we here offer to the reader, muſt depend entirely upon it's conſiſtency with the general cuſtoms of the world: the characters, therefore, are not to be arbitrarily drawn according to the fancy and peculiar deſign of the author, but derived from the inexhauſtible fund of nature itſelf. In the winding up of the ſeveral parts, the probability of the events in themſelves, and in their relative circumſtances, muſt be carefully preſerved, the diſpoſitions of the human heart laid open, the nature of each particular paſſion delineated, with its ſeveral lights and ſhades, when diſplayed in any particular character, or under the accidental circumſtances in which any perſon happens to be placed. Beſides this, the peculiar characteriſtic of the country, of the ſpot, and of the age in which the ſcene of the hiſtory is laid, ſhould be conſtantly kept in view, and the whole narrative ſo put together, that no ſufficient reaſon may be aſſigned, why the events ſhould not have happened exactly as they are told, or why they might not happen again. Such an appearance of truth as this, can only render a work

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of this kind uſeful, and this the author takes upon himſelf to promiſe to the readers of the *Hiſtory of Agathon.*

THE author's deſign was to repreſent a deſerving character in different lights, and under a variety of ſituations. He might, doubtleſs, have fixed upon one of more importance; but as he deſired not to impoſe upon the public fiction for truth, he therefore, made choice of one, which he had the beſt opportunity of being perfectly acquainted with. For this reaſon, he can confidently affirm, that *Agathon*, as well as moſt of the other perſons introduced in this Hiſtory, are real characters; ſuch as have appeared in every age, and are not uncommon in our own. Setting aſide therefore the circumſtances, the concluſions, and peculiar diſpoſition of the collateral incidents, together with every thing that concerns merely the embelliſhment of the work, which is entirely arbitrary, we declare that all the eſſential parts are as truly hiſtorical, and perhaps more to be depended upon, than any compoſition of a political writer of the beſt credit we can meet with.

IT is certain that many things happen in human life, far leſs probable than even the bold fictions of the Chevalier de *Mouhy* himſelf. We ſhould, therefore, be too precipitate in our judgment, were we to doubt of the truth of our Hero's character, becauſe it may often appear improbable, that any one ſhould have thought or acted as he did. If even it ſhould be impoſſible to prove that a man, or that any one placed in the ſame circumſtances as *Agathon* was from his childhood, could think or act as he did, or at leaſt not without a miracle, or the influence of inviſible beings, or ſome ſupernatural inchantment: yet the author thinks he has a right to expect credit, when he poſitively aſſerts, that *Agathon* really thought and acted in this manner.

HISTORIANS of the beſt authority, and *Plutarch's* Lives alone fortunately ſupply us with a ſufficient number of examples, which prove that it is poſſible to be as noble, as virtuous, and as continent as our Hero; or as *Hippias*, and men of his caſt would ſay, as ſingular, as obſtinate, and as abſurd, as he is repreſented in ſome parts of his life.

IN

* In ſeveral places of this work, we have given our reaſons why we have not made *Agathon* the model of a perfectly virtuous character. The world is already ſufficiently ſtocked with copious treatiſes of morality, and every one may freely indulge his fancy, (for nothing is eaſier) in forming a Hero, who ſhall from his cradle to his grave, in every circumſtance and relation of life always perceive, think and act as a perfect moraliſt. But as *Agathon* was intended to repreſent a real character, in which others might diſcover their own likeneſs, we maintain that the author could not, conſiſtently with this deſign, make him more virtuous than he is; but if others are of a contrary opinion (for it is certain, that the beſt character is that which has the greateſt qualities with the feweſt faults) we only deſire that they would among all mankind fix upon any one, who, in a ſimilar ſituation, would have been more virtuous than *Agathon*. *

A young libertine, poſſibly upon finding that an *Agathon* was overcome by the inſinuating allurements of love and of a *Danae*, may be ready to draw the ſame concluſion that *Chærea* does in *Terence*, upon viewing a picture

picture, which repreſented an amorous intrigue of *Jupiter*. After having read with ſecret joy that ſuch a man had fallen, he might exclaim in the words of *Chærea* in the poet; *Ego homuncio hoc non facerem? Ego vero illud faciam, ac lubens.* A man too of a vicious turn of mind, or of a profligate character, may, perhaps, upon reading the argument of the Sophiſt *Hippias*, imagine that they will plead an excuſe for his vices, and juſtify his infidelity; but every honeſt man muſt be convinced, that the immorality of the one, and the licentious freedom of the other, would have been juſt the ſame, had the hiſtory of *Agathon* never appeared.

THIS laſt inſtance naturally lead us to an explanation, which we think ourſelves obliged to make, to obviate the ſcruples of certain ignorant though well meaning perſons, and to prevent them from taking offence haſtily, or forming any raſh judgment. We readily confeſs, that in the conſciouſneſs of the integrity of our intentions, we had not thought ſuch a caution neceſſary, had we not been ſurprized by the obſervation which one of our friends, without our knowledge, thought proper to place under the text for

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this purpoſe at the beginning of the fifth chapter of the ſecond Book. †

This relates to the introduction of the Sophiſt *Hippias* in this hiſtory, and to that particular diſcourſe, in which he flatters himſelf he ſhall get the better of *Agathon's* virtuous and amiable enthuſiaſm, and inſpire him with ſuch a turn of thought, as the Sophiſt with good reaſon believed to be more fit for his advancement in the world. People who ſee things in a proper light, will readily perceive, both from the whole plan of this work, and from the manner in which we ſpeak of this Sophiſt and his principles, how little we approve either the man or his ſyſtem. But though it is neither agreeable to our manner of thinking, or conſiſtent with the caſt and deſign of our work, to inveigh againſt him with the furious zeal which tranſports a young divine, when he enters the field of Polemical controverſy againſt a *Tindal* or a *Bolingbroke*, in order the better to recommend himſelf to the favour of his patron, for a good living: yet we hope we have left the ſenſible and well-diſ-

† This note is omitted in the edition from which this tranſlation is made.

diſpoſed reader no room to doubt, that we look upon *Hippias* as a bad and dangerous man, and conſider his ſyſtem (as far as it oppoſes the eſſential principles of religion and juſtice) as a piece of ſophiſtry, which would deſtroy human ſociety, if it were morally probable that the greater part of mankind ſhould be influenced by it. We flatter ourſelves, that we are entirely free from ſuſpicion upon this head; but among our readers ſome good people may be found, who may at leaſt tax us with imprudence, and think that we either ought not to have introduced ſuch a man as *Hippias*, or, if the plan of our work required it, that we ſhould have fully refuted his principles; we think it but reaſonable to lay before them the motives which induced us to do the one and not the other.

Our plan required that our Hero ſhould be repreſented under a variety of trials, which might make his turn of thought and his virtues conſpicuous, and gradually ſeparate every thing falſe or extravagant from his mind It was therefore neceſſary to make him undergo theſe trials, as *Hippias* is a well known hiſtorical character, who with the other

So-

Sophiſts of his time, had greatly contributed to corrupt the manners of the Greeks: the contraſt alſo between theſe two characters is extremely proper to ſet that of *Agathon* with his principles in the moſt advantageous light. Beſides, as it is but too evident that the greater part of thoſe, who form what is called the polite world, have the ſame ſentiments as *Hippias*, or act agreeably to his principles, ſo it was a part of the moral plan of this work, to ſhew the effect of theſe principles, when reduced to a proper ſyſtem. Theſe are the chief reaſons which occaſioned the introduction of this Sophiſt in our Hiſtory, though we have not repreſented him worſe than he really was, or than his followers are at preſent.

A full refutation of what was either falſe or dangerous in his opinions (for he is not always in the wrong) would have been, according to our deſign, entirely miſplaced; and we cannot but think it would have been alſo ſuperfluous to our readers. *Aagthon's* anſwer to him is the beſt that can be given, but the whole work, to any one who conſiders it altogether, will appear to be a complete refutation of it. *Agathon* baffles *Hip-*

pias nearly in the ſame manner as *Diogenes* did the Sophiſt, who denied that there was any ſuch thing as motion: *Diogenes* permitted him to talk on as long as he would, and when he had done, he contented himſelf only with walking careleſſly about before him. This, undoubtedly, was the only anſwer the Sophiſt deſerved.

THE ſucceſs of the ſecond part † of this work depending ſo much upon the favourable reception of the firſt, we ſhould deprive it of the advantage of novelty, and our readers of the pleaſure they may hereafter receive from it, if we previouſly inform them of its contents. We think it ſufficient to aſſure them, that in the ſecond part of this Hiſtory, our Hero will appear in as many intereſting circumſtances, and intricate ſituations as in the firſt. All we can diſcover of the concluſion of this Hiſtory, is, that *Agathon* in the latter part of his life, which finiſhes our work, becomes a man of as much wiſdom as virtue; and what is of greater conſequence

† The ſecond part of the Original, which this paragraph alludes to, was publiſhed ſome time after the firſt, and is contained in the third and fourth volumes of this tranſlation.

ſequence to our readers, they will perceive how, and by what means this is effected; why there are, perhaps, many among them, who are neither wiſe nor virtuous, and what means they muſt employ if they deſire to become ſo.

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ERRATA.

Page 24. Line 19. that he might become, *read* to become

— 26. — 10. ſoon diſcover his paſſion, *read* be of little conſequence

— 132. — 21. it, *read* her

AGATHON.

BOOK I.

CHAPTER I.

The Beginning of this Hiſtory.

THE ſun was near ſetting, when *Agathon*, wandering in an unfrequented wood, and fatigued with ſearching in vain for an outlet, came to the foot of a hill, the top of which he was deſirous of reaching, in hopes of diſcovering from thence ſome inhabited place where he might paſs the night. With difficulty he aſcended through a kind of path, between the buſhes, and had ſcarcely reached the

middle of the hill when he found himſelf ſo much exhauſted that he almoſt deſpaired of getting to the top, which ſtill appeared to him at a greater diſtance the nearer he came to it: here he threw himſelf down quite breathleſs under a tree which caſt its ſhadow over a little ſpot, where he reſolved to paſs the night.

If any man ever found himſelf in a ſituation, that may be called unhappy, in ſuch an one muſt we allow this youth to be at this inſtant, in which we introduce him to the acquaintance of our readers. A few days before, the favourite of fortune, and the object of envy to his fellow citizens; he, now, by a ſudden reverſe, found himſelf at once deprived of his friends, baniſhed from his native country, and expoſed to all the attacks of adverſe fortune, not even knowing how he ſhould be able to preſerve the only thing yet left him, his mere exiſtence. But notwithſtanding this train of calamities, which conſpired to depreſs his ſpirit, yet hiſtory

aſſures

aſſures us, that any one who had then ſeen him, could not have perceived the leaſt ſigns of deſpair, impatience or even diſcontent, either in his appearance, or in his actions. This deſcription may, perhaps, recal to our mind the picture of the wiſe man drawn by the Stoics, of whom it was ſaid, that he would be as happy in *Phalaris*'s Bull, as an Eaſtern Baſhaw in the arms of a young and fair Circaſſian. But, it will appear in the courſe of this hiſtory, by various proofs, that there was a very ſenſible difference between our hero and the wiſe man of *Seneca*. We think it, therefore, much more probable, that his ſoul was of ſuch a caſt, as to be always ſuſceptible of pleaſing impreſſions, and that one ſingle agreeable ſenſation was ſufficient to make him forget all his paſt ſufferings. An opening in the wood which he perceived between two hills, afforded him a diſtant view of the ſetting ſun. He wanted nothing more to ſuſpend the thought of his

preſent melancholy ſituation; he gave himſelf up to that enthuſiaſtic rapture which men of ſenſibility generally experience from ſo grand and noble a proſpect; and for a long time did not attend to the moſt preſſing demands of nature. At length the ſound of a ſpring iſſuing from a neighbouring rock, rouzed him from the pleaſing extaſy in which he had for ſome minutes been loſt: he aroſe and took up ſome of the water in the hollow of his hand, fancying that ſome kind nymph ſupplied the chryſtal ſtream from her marble vaſe to quench his thirſt; and inſtead of regretting the ſparkling cups of Cyprian wine at the Athenian banquets, thought he had never drank with greater pleaſure. He again laid himſelf down, and, lulled to ſleep by the gentle murmuring of the ſtream, dreamt that he had found his beloved *Pſyche*, whoſe loſs alone, at times, coſt him a ſigh.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Something quite unexpected.

IF it is an undeniable truth, that all things in life are moſt intimately connected with each other, it is no leſs certain, that this connection between particular events is often entirely undiſcoverable: and this ſeems to be the reaſon why hiſtory ſometimes relates adventures much more extraordinary than a writer of romance would preſume to invent. What happened to our hero this night, confirms the obſervation. He ſtill enjoyed the ſweet refreſhment of ſleep, which *Homer* thought ſo great a happineſs, as even to attribute it to the immortal Gods; when a loud and violent noiſe ſuddenly awoke him in ſurpriſe: he turned towards the ſide from whence the ſound ſeemed to proceed, and thought he diſtinguiſhed, amidſt the confuſed noiſe, unuſual cries and ſhouts, which re-ecchoed in a dreadful manner from the oppoſite

rocks. *Agathon*, who, when awake, knew not what it was to be alarmed, reſolved to go to the ſpot from whence the noiſe came, with as much courage as in modern times the invincible knight of *La-Mancha* heroically encountered a windmill in the night. With the utmoſt diligence, therefore, he climbed up to the upper part of the mountain; the moon, in its full ſplendor, diſpelled the evening ſhades, and diffuſing a clear light over the whole country, was extremely favourable to his deſign.

The nearer he approached to the oppoſite ſide of the hill, the more diſtinct was the ſound: he now diſtinguiſhed the beat of drums and the ſhrill ſound of flutes, and began to conſider what might be the cauſe of this uproar, when, ſuddenly, a ſight preſented itſelf before him ſufficient to make even the wiſe man, we have above deſcribed, forget his fancied divinity. A band of young Thracian women, inſpired with Orphean rage, were aſſembled

aſſembled here this night to celebrate the frantic feſtival, which heathen antiquity had inſtituted in remembrance of the famous expedition of *Bacchus* into *India*. A man of a warm imagination, or the pencil of a *La-Fage*, would certainly have made a moſt captivating picture from ſuch a ſcene: but the impreſſion which the real ſight made upon our hero, was far from being of this agreeable caſt. The looſe and flowing hair of theſe Thracian votaries, the rolling eyes, the foaming lips, the bloated cheeks, wildneſs of their looks, and the wanton poſtures by which they expreſſed their licentious mirth, ſhaking their thyrſi entwined with ſerpents, and ſtriking together their cymbals, or ſtammering out, in faultering accents, their unconnected dithyrambics; all theſe exertions of a frantic rage, which appeared ſo much the more ſhocking, as they aroſe from ſuperſtition, were ſo far from having any attractive influence, that they excited in

him a diſguſt for charms, which, in loſing their decency, had loſt their power. He would have fled, but that was impoſſible; as he was diſcovered by theſe Bacchanalian women the very moment he ſaw them. The unexpected appearance of a young man in ſuch a place, and at ſuch a feſtival, which no eye of man had ever dared to profane, immediately ſuſpended their riotous mirth, and their whole attention was fixed upon this object.

We think it here neceſſary to inform our readers of a circumſtance, which is of conſiderable importance thro' this whole hiſtory: *Agathon* was of ſuch exquiſite beauty, that the *Rubens* and *Girardons* of that age, as they deſpaired of finding a more perfect form, or of collecting ſuch an one from the ſcattered beauties of nature, took him for a model, when they wanted to repreſent an *Apollo* or a *Bacchus*. No female eye had ever ſeen him, without paying him the tribute of their ſex; which nature has formed ſo peculiarly

ſenſible

ſenſible to the charms of beauty, that with moſt women, this ſingle perfection alone, compenſates the want of all other qualifications. In this inſtance, it was ſtill of greater conſequence to *Agathon:* it ſaved him from the fate of *Pentheus.* His beauty aſtoniſhed theſe *Mænades.* A youth of ſuch a figure, in ſuch a place, at ſuch a time! Could they poſſibly have a leſs idea of him than that he was *Bacchus* himſelf? In the intoxication in which their ſenſes were then loſt, what could be more natural? This gave, at once, ſuch a turn to their heated imagination, that as they believed the God was before them, they eaſily ſupplied what was wanting to complete their idea of him. Their enchanted eyes repreſented to them the Sileni and cloven-footed Fauns thronging around him, and the tygers and leopards fondly licking his feet: flowers appeared to them to ſpring up under his foot-ſteps, and ſtreams of wine and honey guſhed out wherever he

trod, and ran down the rocks in foaming rivulets. At once the whole mountain, the wood, and all the neighbouring rocks reſounded with loud ſhouts of *Evan ! Evan !* This, added to the horrible noiſe of drums and cymbals, ſtruck ſuch ſurprize and aſtoniſhment into *Agathon*, who had never ſeen, heard, imagined, or even dreamed of any thing which exceeded what was then before him, that he remained motionleſs as a ſtatue, while the tranſported Bacchanals danced in an antic manner around him, and teſtified their joy at the ſuppoſed preſence of their God, by a variety of wild and frantic geſtures.

But, the moſt extravagant enthuſiaſm has its boundaries; and at length yields to the ſuperior influence of the ſenſes. Unfortunately for our hero, theſe raging votaries of *Bacchus*, by degrees, recovered from that enthuſiaſtic extaſy on which their imagination had perhaps been totally exhauſted, and ſoon diſcovered nothing more than human in him; who, on account

count of his extraordinary beauty, had before appeared, to their heated fancy, as a God. Some of them, whoſe conſciouſneſs of their own charms made them ſimple enough to fancy themſelves worthy to become the *Ariadne* to this new *Bacchus*, advanced nearer to him, and the manner in which they endeavoured to expreſs their fondneſs, ſerved only to make his diſguſt the greater, the leſs inclined he was to return their too eager careſſes. In all probability a fierce conteſt would ſoon have enſued, and *Agathon* would at laſt have ſuffered the ſame melancholy fate as *Orpheus*; who, on a like occaſion, had been torn in pieces by the Thracian *Mænades*: But, the immortal powers, who regulate the fate of human events, brought about his deliverance at the very inſtant, when neither his ſtrength nor his virtue would have been ſufficient to preſerve him.

CHAP. III.

An unexpected Interruption of the Feaſt of Bacchus.

A Band of Cilician pirates, who had landed in the night upon this coaſt to take in ſome freſh water, heard, at a diſtance, the noiſe of the Bacchanals, and immediately conceived that this might be a fair opportunity of making a conſiderable booty. They recollected that the principal women of that country were accuſtomed, at this ſeaſon, to celebrate the myſtic orgies of *Bacchus*; and that they came to this meeting attired in their richeſt ornaments, which they laid aſide before they went up the mountain, and left them to the care of a number of female ſlaves till their return. The hopes of ſeizing upon theſe women, and of ſelecting the moſt beautiful among them for the Aſiatick Harems, together with the expectation of getting a large plunder

plunder of rich cloaths and jewels, ſeemed to them an object for which they thought it worth while to be detained ſome time longer: they ſeparated, therefore, into two bands; one of which was to ſeize upon the ſlaves, who had the care of the cloaths, while the other aſcended the mountain, and ruſhing, with a loud clamour among the *Thracian* women, made them priſoners before they had either time or courage to reſiſt. Beſides, the circumſtances of the encounter were ſo critically managed that they had nothing left to employ in their defence but the uſual and moſt becoming arms of their ſex. But theſe *Cilician* pirates were too much accuſtomed to ſcenes of this kind, to pay any attention to their cries and intreaties; or even to be influenced by the charms of thoſe beauties, which as ſoon as they had recovered from their fear and conſternation, appeared ſo attracting, even to the modeſt *Agathon* himſelf, that he thought it beſt to draw off his

his eyes, though reluctantly, from ſo ſeducing an object, and fix them on the ground. But the pirates had a very different object in view: they were wholly engaged in conſidering how they might moſt readily and ſecurely carry off their booty. Thus *Agathon*, at the price of liberty, and a few illiberal jeſts thrown out againſt him, on account of the company in which he had been found, eſcaped a danger, from which, in his own opinion, he could not have delivered himſelf at too dear a rate. In his preſent circumſtances the loſs of liberty ſeemed to him of little conſequence; for as he was deprived of every thing which could make it deſirable, he had the leſs reaſon to be uneaſy at a loſs which, at leaſt, promiſed a change in his misfortunes.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Agathon is conveyed to the Ship.

AFTER the Cilicians had reimbarked with their rich booty, and divided it among them, with greater unanimity than the chiefs of a ſmall republic uſually divide the revenues of the ſtate; they paſſed the reſt of the night in feaſting; at which they did not forget to make amends for that more than ſtoical inſenſibility they had ſhewn in the capture of the Thracian beauties. Whilſt the whole crew was taken up in finiſhing the celebration of the feſtival of *Bacchus*, *Agathon* retired privately into a corner of the ſhip, where overcome with fatigue, he again ſank into a ſlumber, and would willingly have purſued the dream, from which the repeated ſhouts of the *Mænades* had awakened him.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

A Diſcovery.

THE riſing ſun, announced by the roſy-fingered morn, gilded the Ionian ſea with its earlieſt beams, and found the whole crew, who during the night, had ſacrificed to *Bacchus* and his ſiſter Goddeſs, to uſe *Virgil*'s phraſe, buried in wine and ſleep. *Agathon* alone, who uſually roſe by break of day, was firſt rouzed from ſleep by the rays of the ſun gliding horizontally over his forehead. As ſoon as he had opened his eyes he perceived a young man before him in the habit of a ſlave, who viewed him with great attention. Beautiful as *Agathon* was, this amiable young man ſeemed to ſurpaſs him, both in delicacy of ſhape, and bloom of complexion. His countenance, indeed, and his appearance, had ſomething in it which ſo nearly reſembled the beauties of a female

male form, that had he been in women's cloaths, among a company of young virgins, he would, like *Horace's* favourite, have eaſily impoſed upon the moſt accurate obſerver. *Agathon* ſurveyed the young ſlave with equal attention, till the agreeable ſurpriſe he felt was inſenſibly heightened into extaſy. The ſame emotions diſplayed themſelves in the beautiful features of the young ſlave. Their ſouls acknowledged each other at the ſame inſtant, and ſeemed to intermix through the glances of their eyes, before they could even embrace, or their lips, trembling with rapture, could utter *Pſyche! Agathon!* A long time they continued ſilent, nor is it in the power of language to expreſs what they then felt: And what uſe had they for words? Language becomes unneceſſary, when ſouls immediately communicate, perceive and affect each other, and experience more, in one moment, than the tongue of the muſes themſelves would be able to deſcribe in

ſeveral years. The ſun would, probably, have paſſed unobſerved over them, and would have ſunk into the ocean, before the raptures they were in would have allowed them to perceive the ſucceſſion of the hours; but *Agathon*, whom it naturally became to be the firſt to put an end to their ſilence, gently diſengaged himſelf by a tender ſtruggle from the arms of his dear *Pſyche*, anxious to learn by what accident ſhe had fallen into the hands of the pirates. The time, ſaid he, my deareſt *Pſyche* is precious, we muſt improve theſe few moments, while theſe barbarians are ſtill at reſt, overcome by the power of their God. Tell me, by what means you were forced from me, without my being able to find out where you was conveyed, and how I now again find you, in this habit of a ſlave, and under the power of theſe pirates.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

The Hiſtory of Pſyche.

YOU may remember, anſwered *Pſyche*, that unhappy hour, when the jealous prieſteſs firſt diſcovered our love, notwithſtanding our endeavours to conceal it. Nothing could equal her fury, and it was with difficulty my life was preſerved from falling a ſacrifice to her revenge. For ſome days ſhe made me ſuffer every thing which a diſappointed love can invent, to torture a more fortunate rival. Though ſhe might have removed me entirely from your ſight, yet ſhe did not think herſelf ſecure whilſt I continued at *Delphos*; ſhe, therefore, ſoon found out an expedient to get rid of me, without giving cauſe for ſuſpicion. She made a preſent of me to one of her relations, who lived at *Syracuſe*, and imagining that, in this ſituation, I ſhould be removed at a ſufficient diſtance from you

you, ſhe had me conveyed to *Corinth*, and from thence to *Sicily* with the greateſt ſecrecy and diſpatch. Fooliſh woman! Did ſhe then not know the influence of that love which *Agathon* inſpires? Was ſhe not ſenſible that no diſtance, however great, could prevent my ſoul from flying from one zone to the other, and from hovering round thee, like one of the ſhades of departed lovers? Or, did ſhe flatter herſelf with the hopes of appearing more charming in thine eyes, when I was ſeparated from thee? What imperfect ideas had ſhe of our love? No: Jealouſy is as little conſiſtent with true love, as fear is with the conſciouſneſs of one's own ſtrength.—I quitted *Delphos*; my heart racked with anxiety. But, when I took a parting view of that inchanting grove, where thy love gave me a new being, in compariſon of which, my former life was a diſguſtful change of the ſame tedious days and nights, an unanimated vegetable exiſtence — When I at length

loſt

loſt ſight of that dear ſpot—it is impoſſible to expreſs what I felt.—No; *Agathon:* Thou alone canſt conceive it. But as ſoon as I began to recover myſelf, a flood of tears relieved my oppreſſed heart: there was a luxury in theſe tears, to which I gave a free courſe, unconcerned whether they were obſerved or not. The world appeared to me an empty ſpace, and al objects around me viſionary deluſions. I ſaw, I heard you only; I reclined myſelf upon your boſom, I threw my arms about your neck, my eyes diſcovered to you the inmoſt ſentiments of my ſoul; I led you through thoſe ſacred groves, where you firſt taught me to feel the preſence of the immortal Gods: I lay down at your feet, and my ſoul, hanging, as it were, upon your lips, imagined, whenever you ſpoke, that ſhe heard the harmony of the muſes: we walked hand in hand, by moon light through Elyſian fields, and ſat down among the flowers, whilſt our ſouls, in their ſpiritual lan-

guage

guage diſcovered themſelves to each other, ſaw nothing around them but light and bliſs, and wiſhed only for immortality, that their love might be eternal. Amidſt theſe recollections, the vivacity of which made me almoſt inſenſible to all external impreſſion, my heart gradually recovered its tranquility. As I conſidered myſelf only as part of yourſelf, I could not imagine, that we ſhould be ſeparated for ever. This hope kept me alive, and ſo wholly engroſſed my thoughts, that I again became calm; for I had no doubt, nay I was confident, that you would never ceaſe to love me. I reſigned you, therefore, without fear to the violent paſſion of a powerful and engaging rival. I knew, that if ſhe even prevailed ſo far as to ſeduce your ſenſes, it was ſtill beyond her power to inſpire you with a love like ours, and that you would ſoon again be longing after her, who alone can make you happy; becauſe ſhe alone can love you, as you would wiſh to be loved.

Wholly

Wholly taken up with thoughts like theſe, I at length arrived at *Syracuſe*. The prudent prieſteſs had taken care to prevent me from finding out any method to acquaint you with the place of my retirement. My new miſtreſs was one of thoſe eaſy characters, ſatisfied with themſelves, and pleaſed with every thing about them. I had the honour to attend her perſon and aſſiſt her in ſetting off her head dreſs, and acquitted myſelf in this office ſo much to her ſatisfaction, that I ſoon became almoſt as great a favourite as her lap-dog. In this ſituation I continued, and thought myſelf as happy in it as I could have been in any, which was not enlivened by your preſence, till the ſcene was unhappily changed by the arrival of her ſon.

CHAP.

CHAP. VII.

Continuation of the Hiſtory of Pſyche.

NARCISSUS, for ſo was the young man called, had been ſent to *Athens* by his mother, in order to attend the leſſons of the philoſophers, and to adopt the refined manners of the Athenian people. But, he found he had no time to do either the one or the other. A ſet of young people, whom he looked upon as his friends, took care to procure him ſome new ſcene of diſſipation every day, which prevented him from frequenting the gloomy walks of the philoſophers: beſides, he had been told by the girls who ſell noſegays at *Athens*, that he was a very amiable young man. He believed them: and, after ſo deciſive an evidence, he thought it entirely unneceſſary to give himſelf any trouble that he might become in reality what he was already in imagination. His principal ſtudy was

to conſider in what manner he might ſet off his perſon to the beſt advantage; and no man in *Athens* was more ridiculouſly dreſſed, or could boaſt having whiter teeth, or a ſofter hand than *Narciſſus*. He excelled in the art of turning upon his heel twice in a moment; nor was he leſs remarkable for his dexterity in the management of the fan, and the taſte which he diſplayed in placing flowers to advantage in a lady's hair. Such qualifications, he thought, gave him a natural claim to the favour of the fair ſex. The facility with which his merits had triumphed over the tender hearts of theſe nymphs, encouraged him to try his ſucceſs on the chambermaids, till at length he ventured to attack the ladies themſelves. Little concerned in what manner his addreſſes were received, he had been uſed to flatter himſelf that he was irreſiſtible: and when his attempts were unſucceſsful, he made himſelf amends for the diſappointment, by boaſting of fa-

vours he had never received. Do you wonder, *Agathon*, how I came to the knowledge of theſe particulars?—I had them from himſelf.—He informed me of every thing that had eſcaped my own notice: for he himſelf was the inexhauſtible theme of his whole diſcourſe, as well as the only object of his admiration. A lover of this kind would, probably, ſoon diſcover his paſſion. For ſome time his folly ſerved to amuſe me, till he became importunate.—He thought it out of character, that an attendant of his mother ſhould be inſenſible to thoſe perfections, which had excited envy among the free nymphs of *Athens*. I was at laſt obliged to have recourſe to his mother for protection; but the ſame diſpoſition which made her indulgent to herſelf, to her lap-dog, and to all the world, made her equally partial to the follies of her ſon. She ſeemed to take it very ill that I ſhould be ſo inſenſible to the qualifications of ſuch an amiable young man. Impatient

of

of the inſults to which I was continually expoſed, I frequently reſolved privately to make my eſcape: but I had received no news from you, and had only been accidentally told by a traveller from *Delphos*, that you had lately diſappeared from thence, and that no one knew where you was gone. The uncertainty of this intelligence threw me into ſuch uneaſineſs of mind, that my health began to be gradually impaired, when this ſame *Narciſſus*, whoſe ridiculous paſſion had ſo long tormented me, reſtored me undeſignedly to life again: for he one day related to me how a certain Athenian, whoſe name was *Agathon*, after having gained a victory over the revolted inhabitants of *Eubœa*, had again reduced the iſland to the obedience of his republic. The circumſtances he added to the account of this *Agathon*, left me no room to doubt that you yourſelf was the perſon. A female ſlave who was devoted to me, favoured my eſcape.—She had a lover who had

perſuaded her to go off with him—I aſſiſted her in carrying the deſign into execution, and made one of the party. The young Sicilian in return, procured me this habit of a ſlave, and conveyed me to a ſhip under ſail for *Athens*. I paſſed for a ſlave who was going to meet his maſter at *Athens*, and committed myſelf a ſecond time, to the mercy of the waves, with ideas very different from thoſe I had experienced the firſt time; for now, inſtead of ſeparating, I hoped they would bring us together again.

CHAP.

CHAP. VIII.

Pſyche concludes her Narrative.

FOR ſome days our voyage was favourable, except that the wind driving us to the weſtward, made our paſſage unuſually long. But, on the evening of the ſixth day, a violent ſtorm aroſe, which, in a few hours, drove us a conſiderable way back; the ſhip, however, with ſome difficulty, had at laſt the good fortune to reach one of the uninhabited iſlands of the Cyclades, which afforded us a ſhelter from the ſeverity of the ſtorm. In the very ſame bay we found another ſhip lying at anchor, in which theſe Cilicians were, to whom we are now ſubject. They hung out a Grecian flag; ſaluted us, and came on board our veſſel; and as they underſtood our language, they had no difficulty in amuſing us with as many ſtories as they thought neceſſary to engage our confidence.

By degrees our crew became familiar with theirs: they brought them large pitchers of Cyprian wine, with which, in a few hours, our people were intoxicated. They immediately made themſelves maſters of our whole veſſel, and as ſoon as the ſtorm was over, put again to ſea. By the diviſion of the ſpoil, I fell to the captain's ſhare, who was ſtruck with my figure, without ſuſpecting my ſex. This ſecret, however, was of leſs ſervice to me than I expected. The captain, whom I was under a neceſſity of conſidering as my maſter, ſoon began to torment me with profeſſions of a paſſion extremely diſguſting to me. He called me his *Ganymede*, and ſwore by all the *Nereids* and *Tritons* of the deep, that I ſhould be to him, what that Trojan prince had been to *Jupiter*; but as he perceived that his careſſes were ineffectual, I was at laſt obliged to tell him that I looked upon my life of little value, in compariſon to the preſervation of my honour. This

declaration

declaration procured me ſome reſpite, and I began to think upon ſome method for the recovery of my liberty: I accordingly gave him to underſtand that I was not of that low condition, which the mean habit I then wore might lead him to imagine; and preſſed him, with the utmoſt earneſtneſs, to convey me again to *Athens*, where he might have whatever ſum he required for my ranſom. But, he was wholly inexorable upon this head; and that beloved *Athens*, in which I thought you ſtill were, was every day removed at a greater diſtance from me. How little did I imagine, that even this ſeparation, which made me ſo unhappy, ſhould prove the occaſion of bringing us together again! But, alas! under what circumſtances do we meet again! Both of us deprived of freedom; deſtitute of friends; without any means of aſſiſtance, or the hope of recovering our liberty; and condemned to be the ſlaves of theſe barbarians. The furious paſſion of this

tyrant will ſoon deprive us of the only ſatisfaction that can alleviate our preſent misfortunes. Since the firmneſs of my reſolution has made him deſpair of ſucceſs, his paſſion ſeems to have given way to a violent jealouſy, which is anxious to prevent any perſon from poſſeſſing what it cannot enjoy itſelf. The ſavage will not allow me to have any intercourſe with you, as he ſcarce ſuffers me ever to be ſeen. Yet the uncertainty of what may happen, ſhall not, for one moment, break in upon my preſent joy: I ſee thee *Agathon*, and am happy; how deſirous ſhould I have been, ſome hours ago, to have purchaſed ſuch an inſtant as this, with my life! In ſaying this, ſhe embraced the happy *Agathon* with ſuch affectionate tenderneſs, that the tranſport their hearts mutually experienced, brought on, a ſecond time, a profound ſilence: how, indeed, ſhall we be able to deſcribe what they felt, ſince love itſelf would not be eloquent enough to expreſs it?

CHAP.

CHAP. IX.

How Pſyche and Agathon were again ſeparated.

AS ſoon as our lovers had recovered from their tranſports, *Pſyche*, who had ſatisfied *Agathon*'s curioſity by the recital of her adventures, requeſted the ſame favour from him. As the time would not permit to be very circumſtantial, he only told her in what manner he fled from *Delphos*; that he had become acquainted with an Athenian, whom he diſcovered to be his father; that he had accidentally been engaged in the management of public affairs, and gained the favour of the people by his eloquence. He related the ſervices he had done the republic; by what means his jealous enemies had excited the people againſt him, and in a few days cauſed him to be baniſhed from *Athens* for life; deprived of all right and claim to his pa-

ternal eſtate. He then informed her of the reſolution he immediately took, of travelling into the eaſt, and of the accident by which he fell into the hands of the Cilicians. They then began to conſult upon ſome method of making their eſcape; but the noiſe made in the ſhip, by the pirates, who were now beginning to awake, obliged *Pſyche* to retire with the utmoſt haſte, that ſhe might prevent the leaſt ſhadow of ſuſpicion, which was ſufficient to prove fatal to her lover. Like lovers in our romances, they bewailed themſelves that they had loſt ſuch favourable moments in unneceſſary narratives; ſenſible, as they were, that they might not have any other opportunity of converſing together. The only thing which could afford them any comfort was, that all their plan and contrivance would have been ineffectual. The captain of the ſhip had this morning received intelligence, that a veſſel, richly laden, was ready to ſail from *Leſbos* to *Corinth*; and the circumſtances

ſtances of the account gave him to underſtand that ſhe might be intercepted in her paſſage. This advice occaſioned a conſultation among the chiefs of the pirates, the reſult of which was, that *Agathon*, with the Thracian captive ladies, and ſome other young ſlaves, ſhould be put into a boat with a guard, and immediately conveyed to *Smyrna* for ſale whilſt the galley, with the principal force of the pirates, ſhould prepare to attack the veſſel, whoſe rich booty they already poſſeſſed in imagination. At that inſtant *Agathon* loſt all the reſolution which had hitherto ſupported him againſt all the ſtorms of adverſe fortune: the thought of being again ſeparated from his dear *Pſyche*, made him almoſt loſe his ſenſes. He threw himſelf at the feet of the Cilician, and ſwore that the counterfeit *Ganymede* was his brother, and offered to become his ſlave: he entreated—he wept in vain. The pirate's diſpoſition was like the element to which he was ac-

cuſtomed: the Syrens themſelves could not have perſuaded him to alter his reſolution. *Agathon* was not even allowed to take leave of his dear brother. The emotions he had diſcovered upon this occaſion, had raiſed ſuſpicions in the captain: he was, therefore, carried to the boat totally overcome with agony and deſpair; and it was not till a conſiderable time after he had loſt ſight of his dear *Pſyche*, that he became fully ſenſible of the whole extent of his miſery.

CHAP.

CHAP. X.

A Soliloquy.

AS we have paid the ſtricteſt attention to truth, in the following hiſtory, and have carefully avoided every circumſtance which might lead us to ſuſpect its authenticity; ſo we had ſome doubt whether we ſhould communicate the ſoliloquy, which, in this place, occurs in our manuſcript. But, the anonymous writer has taken care to inform us, that his hiſtory, in moſt circumſtances, is taken from a kind of journal, which appears by the ſtrongeſt evidence, to have been in *Agathon*'s own hand writing; a copy of which he procured from a friend of his at *Crotona*. This circumſtance makes us eaſily conceive how the author came to the knowledge of what *Agathon* ſaid to himſelf on this, as well as on other occaſions; and anſwers the objection generally made to ſoliloquies, in which the hiſtorian

hiſtorian ſo readily imitates the example of the poets, without being able, like them, to invoke the inſpiration of the muſes.

The original manuſcript proceeds to inform us, that after the firſt emotions of grief were allayed, which uſually makes us ſtupid and inſenſible; *Agathon* looked about him, and when he ſaw nothing but the ſky and water on every ſide ſurrounding him, he began according to cuſtom to reaſon with himſelf. Is then all that has happened to me only a dream; or have I really ſeen her? Have I really heard the inchanting ſound of her ſweet voice; or have I embraced a meer ſhade? If it was more than a dream, why ſhould I have nothing remaining, but the remembrance of an object which obliterates all other images from my ſoul?—If uniformity and connection are the diſtinguiſhing characters of truth; O! how much do all the events of my life reſemble the accidental ſportings of a viſionary fancy!

fancy! — Educated from my infancy among the ſacred laurels of the Delphic God, I flattered myſelf, under his protection, to paſs my days in eaſe and tranquility, wholly employed in the contemplation of truth, and in ſecret intercourſe with the immortals. Days of perfect innocence, each like the other, glided on as ſo many moments, uninterrupted with care, and I inſenſibly advanced towards the ſtate of manhood. A prieſteſs, whoſe ſoul ſhould have been the manſion of the Gods, as her tongue proclaims their oracles, regardleſs of her ſacred vow, endeavours to ſeduce my unexperienced youth for the gratification of her deſires. Her paſſion deprived me of the object of my love; and her ſecret machinations, at length, compelled me to fly from that ſacred aſylum, in which it was my only endeavour to reſemble thoſe deities and heroes, whoſe images were continually before me. Driven into an unknown world, I unexpectedly find a father I had never

never known, and diſcover my native country. By a ſudden change of circumſtances, I am as unexpectedly promoted to the higheſt authority in the city of *Athens*. Compelled by the blind confidence of the people, as laviſh in their favours, as they are violent in their diſpleaſures, to take upon myſelf the command of their army.—An extraordinary ſucceſs attends all my undertakings, crowns all my deſigns, and I return victorious. — What a triumph! — What ſhouts of applauſe! — What divine honours were then paid me! And all this for actions in which I had the leaſt ſhare. My ſtatue was but juſt ſet up between thoſe of *Cecrops* and *Theſeus*, when the very ſame people, who, a few days before, were preparing to erect altars to me, now dragged me with brutal rage, to the tribunal of juſtice. The envy which the exceſs of my good fortune had excited, ſoon occaſioned a general prepoſſeſſion againſt me; and no one would liſten to

my

my defence. Actions, for which I ſecretly applauded myſelf, were, in the mouths of my accuſers, imputed to me as crimes; and ſentence of condemnation was paſſed upon me. Forſaken by all thoſe who pretended to be my warmeſt friends; and who, a ſhort time before, were the moſt forward and zealous in expreſſing their attachment.—I quitted *Athens* with greater ſatisfaction than I experienced a few weeks before, when I was carried through the gates of the city amidſt the joyful acclamations of an innumerable multitude. I took the reſolution to wander through the earth, in ſearch of a place where virtue, ſecure from oppreſſion, might enjoy its proper happineſs, without being entirely baniſhed from ſociety. I direct my courſe into *Aſia*, on the banks of the *Oxus*, in order to viſit the place from whence the ſacred myſteries of the Orphean rites have been derived to us.—Chance brings me among a troop of frantic Bacchanalian women,

from

from whoſe amorous phrenzy I am only delivered by falling into the hands of ſavage pirates: at the ſame moment in which I am deprived of every thing a man can loſe, except his life, I recover my *Pſyche!* and ſcarcely have I perſuaded myſelf that it is ſhe whom I am claſping in my arms, when ſhe is again ſeparated from me, and I am put on board this veſſel to be conveyed to *Smyrna*, and ſold for a ſlave. — How exactly does all this reſemble a dream, when the heated imagination, without order, without probability, and without diſtinction of time or place, tranſports the ſoul from one event to another; from the throne to the cottage, from joy to deſpair, from the gloom of Tartarus to the brightneſs of Elyſium!—Is then life only a dream; a mere viſion? Is it ſo vain, ſo trifling, ſo unſubſtantial? Is it the fickle ſporting of a blind chance, or of inviſible beings, who take a cruel delight in making us alternately happy or miſerable? Or, is

life

life the univerſal ſoul of the world, whoſe exiſtence the ſecret Majeſty of Nature proclaims? Is it that all-vivifying ſpirit which regulates human events?—Why then do we not obſerve in the moral world, the ſame invariable order and connection, by which the elements, the ſeaſons, the ſtars, and the orbits of the heavenly bodies are preſerved in ſuch a regular and uniform manner?—Why is innocence oppreſſed and fraud triumphant?—Why does an inexorable fate perſecute the virtuous?—Are our ſouls allied to the immortals?—Are they the offſpring of Heaven?—Why then are they not the diſtinguiſhed objects of its care; and, why do the Gods ſeem rather to ſide with their enemies? Or, if they are wholly indifferent about us, Why are we not one moment maſters of our fate? Why does neceſſity or chance fruſtrate our wiſeſt deſigns?

HERE *Agathon* pauſed a while, wholly loſt and bewildered in ſuch perplexing doubts

doubts from which he in vain endeavoured to extricate himſelf, when caſting his eyes again on the majeſty of the ſcene which ſurrounded him, a new train of ideas unfolded itſelf to his imagination.—What then, continued he, are all my doubts, but the ſuggeſtions of ſelf-intereſted paſſion? Who could be happier than I was this morning? Pleaſure and delight ſmiled all around me. Is then nature ſuddenly changed, or is it leſs the ſame viſible ſcene of boundleſs perfection becauſe *Agathon* is a ſlave, and ſeparated from his beloved *Pſyche*? Bluſh, thou deſponding mortal, at thy impious doubts, and unmanly complaints! How canſt thou conſider that as a loſs, the poſſeſſion of which, is not a real good? Is it an evil, to be deprived of thy rank and thy fortune, and baniſhed thy native country? At *Delphos*, though bereft of all theſe, thou ſtill waſt happy and didſt not feel the want of them.—Why ſhouldſt thou lay claim to

to thoſe things, which do not properly belong to thee, which are wholly dependant upon chance; which it is not in thy power either to acquire or to preſerve? In what eaſe, tranquility, and happineſs did my days paſs on at *Delphos*, before I was acquainted with the buſy ſcenes of life, its cares, its pleaſures, or its changes! Before I was under the neceſſity of contending either with my own paſſions or with thoſe of others, or of ſacrificing myſelf and all the enjoyments of life to an ungrateful people, and making myſelf miſerable by the vain and fruitleſs attempt of contributing to the happineſs of the ſons of vice and folly.

My own experience ſufficiently refutes my impious doubts and diſcontent. There were moments, there were days, even a ſeries of days, in which I was happy. Happy in thoſe delightful hours, when my ſoul inſpired with the contemplation of nature, loſt itſelf in deep ſpeculations and pleaſing conjectures, as if it wandered

in

in the inchanted garden of the *Heſperides*. Happy, in the arms of love, when my contented heart forgot every care, every deſire, and ſeemed to taſte the bliſs of the immortal Gods! Happier ſtill in moments, the bare remembrance of which is ſufficient to alleviate the ſevereſt pangs, when my ſoul was abſorbed in the awful conſideration of the eternal and infinite being.—Yes, I perceived, I felt the certainty of thy exiſtence, thou all-animating, all-ruling goodneſs.—I experienced the beauty of virtue, which makes us reſemble thee. I enjoyed that happineſs, which makes whole days glide away with the rapidity of a moment, and ſtamps the value of ages upon the duration of an inſtant. The power of ſentiment diſpels all my doubts, and the remembrance of my paſt happineſs removes my preſent anxiety, and promiſes me happier days to come. Thoſe general ſources of joy which belong to all created beings are now open to me, as before, and my

ſoul

ſoul is ſtill invariably the ſame, as nature which ſurrounds me is uniform. Oh! pleaſing tranquility of the life I led at *Delphos*, and thou my dear *Pſyche* whom I may juſtly call my own, ſince thou art the better half of my exiſtence!—If I ſhould loſe thee for ever, my ſoul, incapable of comfort, could then find nothing upon earth which could make life any longer deſireable. But, I have experienced both theſe delights, without having procured them to myſelf; and the ſame beneficent power which beſtowed them on me at firſt, can reſtore them to me again! Pleaſing expectations. Thou art the foretaſte of that happineſs reſerved for me hereafter! How impious then, as well as fooliſh, is it to give way to my affliction, which, at the ſame time that it is offenſive to heaven, deprives me of the power of bearing up againſt adverſity, and of the means of becoming happy again. Come then, thou fond hope of better fortune, and fill my

my ſoul with thy flattering inchantment. Give me only, O ye Gods! tranquility and *Pſyche*, and I ſhall willingly reſign honours and riches to thoſe on whom ye ſhall be pleaſed to beſtow them.

CHAP. XI.

Agathon arrives at Smyrna and is ſold.

THE weather was ſo favourable, that *Agathon* had full leiſure to indulge his reflections as long as he would, particularly as the voyage was not attended with any of thoſe circumſtances, which afford room for the ornaments of a poetical deſcription: there appeared neither *Tritons* blowing through their ſpiral ſhells, nor *Nereids* riding through the waves upon the backs of dolphins, whom they guided with reins made of garlands of flowers, nor did any Syrens appear half out of the water, and endeavour to captivate the eye by their beauty,

and

and the ear by their melody. The winds, for ſeveral days, were as calm as if they had conſpired to afford us no opportunity of deſcribing either a tempeſt or a ſhipwreck: in ſhort, the voyage was ſo proſperous, that on the evening of the third day the veſſel arrived in the harbour of *Smyrna*. The pirates, being now under no apprehenſion of danger, immediately brought their captives on ſhore, in hopes of making a conſiderable advantage of them by expoſing them to ſale at the ſlave-market. Their firſt care was to convey them to the public baths, where every thing was done which might contribute to heighten their value. *Agathon* was too deeply engaged in the recollection of what was paſt, to pay any attention to the preſent. He was, therefore, bathed and perfumed with ointments and ſweet ſcented waters, dreſſed in a ſlave's habit made of different coloured ſilks; every art was employed to ſet off his perſon to the beſt advantage; and he

was admired by all who ſaw him: yet none of theſe circumſtances could rouze him from that total inſenſibility, which in certain ſituations, is a natural conſequence of exquiſite feelings. Wholly taken up with his thoughts, or diſguſted with every thing he ſaw or heard, he ſeemed regardleſs of all. Nothing but the view of the ſlave-market was capable of awakening him from his reverie. This ſcene, indeed, did not appear ſo ſhocking to him, as a ſlave-market at *Barbadoes* is apt to do to an European, in whom the prejudices which ariſe from more refined manners have left ſome remains of humanity. But yet it was ſufficient to excite in him the moſt melancholy reflections, accuſtomed as he was, to conſider in men the excellency of their nature, more than the lowneſs of their ſituation, and to view them, rather as they appeared, according to his prejudices, than as they really were. This mortifying ſight, at once brought to his mind a train of perplexing

plexing and confuſed ideas, and at the ſame time that his heart was melted with tenderneſs and compaſſion, it glowed with generous indignation againſt mankind; an indignation, of which the friends of humanity only are ſuſceptible. Theſe reflections made him inſenſibly forget his own misfortunes, when a man of graceful appearance, and who ſeemed rather advanced in life, ſtopped, as he paſſed along, to obſerve him, and examined him with particular attention. To whom does this young ſlave belong, ſaid the man, addreſſing himſelf to one of the Cilicians who ſtood near him? To any one, who buys him of me, replied the other. In what art is he ſkilled, ſaid he? He will give you the beſt account of that himſelf, anſwered the Cilician. The man then turned towards *Agathon*, and aſked him, if he was not a Greek, whether he had not lived in *Athens*, and if he had been inſtructed in the polite arts? To theſe ſeveral queſtions, *Agathon*

anſwered in the affirmative. "Can you read *Homer?*" "I can, and think that I am ſenſible of his beauties." "Are you acquainted with the writings of the philoſophers?" "No, for I do not underſtand them." You pleaſe me, young man. What value do you ſet upon him my friend? He ought, anſwered the Cilician, to be cried, as the other ſlaves, by the herald, but he is your's for two talents. Bring him to my houſe, replied the old man, thou ſhalt have the two talents, and the ſlave is mine. Your money muſt ſurely be very troubleſome to you, ſaid *Agathon*, for how can you poſſibly know, that my ſervices will be adequate to ſuch a ſum? If they ſhould not, replied the buyer; I am very eaſy about that, for I am ſure there are few ladies in *Smyrna*, who would not willingly return me the two talents, only for the ſake of your figure. In ſaying this, he ordered *Agathon* to follow him to his houſe.

AGATHON.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER I.

Account of the perſon who purchaſed Agathon.

THE man, who for two talents had acquired the right of treating *Agathon* as his ſlave, was one of thoſe remarkable men, who under the name of Sophiſts, travelled over the principal cities of *Greece*, in order to inſinuate themſelves into the favour of the richeſt and nobleſt young men of the country. By their engaging converſation, and pompous promiſes, that they would make perfect orators, complete ſtateſmen, and accompliſhed generals, of their friends, they diſcovered the ſecret which

the Alchymiſts have hitherto ſought for in vain. They were generally diſtinguiſhed by the honourable appellation of Sophiſts or Sages. But, the philoſophy they profeſſed, was entirely different in its nature and effects, or, to ſpeak with more propriety, it may juſtly be ſaid to have been the very reverſe of that which *Socrates* introduced, and which was held in ſuch high eſtimation by ſome of his followers. The Sophiſts taught the art of moving the paſſions of other men; *Socrates*, that of reſtraining ones own. They pointed out the means to make men ſeem wiſe and virtuous; *Socrates* ſhewed, how they might become ſo: they encouraged the young Athenians to take upon themſelves the government of the ſtate, *Socrates* on the contrary, adviſed them firſt to ſpend half of their life, in learning the art of governing themſelves. The Socratic philoſophy, was to them an object of ridicule, as it always appeared under a ſimple habit,

and

and contented itſelf with the plaineſt diet: while theirs ſhone in purple, and indulged itſelf in all the luxuries of the table. The one gloried in poverty, the other in acquiring riches: this was courteous, inſinuating, and excelled in the art of accommodating itſelf to every ſituation; it deified the great, crouched to their ſervants, trifled with the ladies, and beſtowed flattery on all who would reward it. It was never out of its way; it was well received at court, liked at the toilet, cheriſhed at the gaming table, favoured by the nobility, pleaſing to the ſtateſman, in the good graces of the heroines of the threatre, and agreeable even to the prieſthood. The Socratic philoſophy, was far from being ſo amiable, it was dry, unacquainted with life: and it was ſcarcely ſupportable, becauſe it found fault with every thing and was always in the right: by the buſy part of mankind, it was thought abſurd, and by the devout, it was conſidered as having a dangerous tendency.

There would be no end to the contraſt, if we were to carry it as far as we could. Let it ſuffice that the philoſophy of the Sophiſts had indiſputably one advantage over that of *Socrates*: as it procured to thoſe who profeſſed it, riches, honour and fame, and an abundance of all thoſe conveniencies of life, which the world conſiders as eſſential to happineſs.

Hippias (for ſo was *Agathon's* maſter called) was one of thoſe fortunate men who poſſeſs the art of acquiring riches, by taking advantage of the follies of others: by a ſucceſsful application of this art in one part of life, he was enabled to ſpend the other, in the pleaſures of an eaſy independency, the full enjoyment of which, ſeems better adapted to a riper age, than to the impetuoſity of youth. For this purpoſe, he had fixed upon *Smyrna* for the place of his reſidence. The agreeable temperature of the Ionian climate, the beautiful ſituation of the city itſelf, the great plenty which an extenſive commerce

merce procured it, together with the mixture of the Grecian elegance and Eaſtern luxury, for which it was remarkable, made him prefer this place, to all others he was acquainted with. *Hippias*, by his ſuperior abilities, had the reputation of excelling all the Sophiſts of his age. Though he was now turned of fifty, yet he ſtill retained ſuch a ſhare of thoſe pleaſing qualifications, which had been ſo advantageous to him in his youth, that his company was ſought after by the politeſt perſons of both ſexes. He had every accompliſhment which could make the philoſophy he profeſſed ſeducing. A noble air, an engaging countenance, a ſweet tone of voice, an eaſy and ready wit, and an eloquence the more pleaſing, as it appeared rather natural, than acquired. Theſe talents for converſation, joined to a ſuperficial acquaintance with all the ſciences, a refined taſte and a perfect knowledge of the world, were more than ſufficient to make him be conſidered by

all whom he converſed with, (for he kept no company with the followers of *Socrates*) as a man of the firſt genius: he was generally applauded before the company knew what he was going to ſay, and his opinions were always allowed to be deciſive. But, he was principally indebted for his good fortune, to the peculiar talent he poſſeſſed of rendering himſelf agreeable to the ladies. His prudence very ſoon diſcovered to him, of what great conſequence the favour of theſe charming creatures was. He knew that they really had as much influence over the political world, as in tales is attributed to the Fairies. He knew, that with a glance of their eye, or by a partial diſcovery of the beauties the handkerchief conceals, they were better able to gain their point, than even a *Demoſthenes* or a *Lyſias* by their moſt eloquent orations. He knew, that with a ſingle tear they could diſarm the commanders of legions, and by the ſuperiority which their figure only,

only, and a certain paſſionate inclination of the other ſex for them was capable of giving, they could eaſily obtain an abſolute power over thoſe, upon whom the fate of empires depends. This diſcovery appeared to *Hippias* of ſo much utility, that he had ſpared no pains, to bring the practice of this art to the greateſt perfection poſſible; and the advantages he derived from it in his riper years, ſhewed what he muſt have been in his youth. His vanity in this particular proceeded ſo far that it led him to reduce into a ſyſtem the art of *inchanting the ſorcereſſes*, and to communicate to the world his experience and obſervations upon this ſubject in a learned treatiſe; the loſs of which is much to be regretted, as it can ſcarcely be expected that it can ever be repaired by any of the writers of the preſent age. After what we have already ſaid of this Sophiſt, it would be unneceſſary to give a particular idea of his moral character. His ſyſtem

of the art of living, will ſoon be circumſtantially laid before us. One virtue, however, he poſſeſſed, which moraliſts are not uſually remarkably for, he lived conſiſtently with his principles.

CHAP. II.

The Deſigns of Hippias.

AMONG the ſeveral inclinations, in the gratification of which, the true uſe of riches is generally ſaid to conſiſt, *Hippias* had a particular taſte for every thing that pleaſed the eye. He had, therefore, taken care, that at leaſt every object which might preſent itſelf in any part of his houſe, ſhould be ſtriking and beautiful. The fineſt pictures, the moſt beautiful ſtatues and ſculptures, the richeſt tapeſtry, the moſt elegant furniture, and the moſt coſtly vaſes were not ſufficient to ſatisfy his taſte unleſs the animated part of his houſe

houſe correſponded with the magnificence which was every where ſo conſpicuous. His male, therefore, as well as female ſlaves were the moſt exquiſite forms that could be procured in a country remarkable for beauty.

Agathon's figure alone would, therefore, have ſufficiently recommended him to *Hippias's* favour: but there was alſo another circumſtance which had no ſmall influence with the Sophiſt upon this occaſion: he wanted a perſon to read to him, and from the firſt view he had of *Agathon*, and the anſwer he made him, he judged him perfectly well adapted to an employment, for which a pleaſing countenance and a muſical voice are the moſt eſſential qualifications. He had likewiſe another ſecret deſign, which he flattered himſelf this young man would enable him to carry into execution. The love of ſenſual pleaſures ſeemed, indeed, to be his ruling paſſion, but vanity had alſo no inconſiderable ſhare in moſt of the actions

of

of his life. Before he ſettled at *Smyrna*, in order to enjoy the fruit of his labour, he had paſſed the beſt part of his life in forming the education of the young nobility of *Athens*. He had made orators, who by artfully blending truth with falſhood, and by a ſkilful application of certain figurative expreſſions knew how to give to a bad cauſe, all the appearance of a good one. He had made ſtateſmen, who amidſt the applauſes of an infatuated multitude, overturned the conſtitution under the ſpecious pretence of liberty, and ſubverted liberty itſelf, by introducing a corrupt ſyſtem of morals: that thoſe, who refuſed to ſubmit themſelves to the ſalutary reſtraint of the laws, might become wholly ſubject to the arbitrary power of their paſſions. He had made heroes who procured ſtatues to be erected to their honour, for having totally ruined their native country. But his vanity was not yet ſatisfied with all theſe great exploits. He was alſo very

deſirous

deſirous of leaving a ſucceſſor capable of perpetuating his art, which appeared to him too excellent and important to be ſuffered to die with him. He had for a long time, been looking out for a young man, poſſeſſed of natural qualifications, in ſuch a degree of perfection as he thought neceſſary to become the diſciple of a *Hippias*. The gift he had of diſcerning the internal qualities of men, by their outward air and appearance, induced him to believe, that *Agathon* would anſwer his expectations. At leaſt he thought it worth while to make the trial, and as he had formed the moſt favourable opinion of his abilities, he entertained not the leaſt doubt of his inclination to ſecond the great deſigns he had in view for him.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Surprize of Agathon.

THE only circumſtance *Agathon* knew of his preſent ſituation was, that he belonged to a maſter whoſe countenance pleaſed him; but on entering into his houſe he was ſtruck with a degree of aſtoniſhment, unuſual to him, at the elegance of the building, the convenient arrangement of the apartments, the number and good appearance of the ſervants, and at the magnificence and luxury which were diſplayed on every ſide. But his ſurprize was ſtill greater, when he heard that he had the honour to be one of the domeſtic ſervants of the Philoſopher *Hippias*. He was conſidering with himſelf, what ſpecies of philoſophy this could poſſibly be, when *Hippias*, after giving inſtructions for the payment of the Cilician, ordered him to attend him in his cloſet, and communicated to him the nature

nature of the employment he deſigned for him in the following words: The laws, ſaid he, *Callias*, (for ſo ſhalt thou from this time be called) authorize me, indeed, to conſider thee as my ſlave; but it will depend entirely upon thee, to enjoy the ſame happineſs here as I do. Thy whole employment will conſiſt in reading *Homer* at my table, and ſome eſſays, which I amuſe myſelf in compoſing, to a ſelect number of my friends. Thou mayſt, perhaps, imagine the taſk to be an eaſy one, but thou muſt know that I am very difficult, and that thy audience will conſiſt of connoiſſeurs. An Ionian ear is not ſatisfied with being charmed, it muſt be enraptured. Sweetneſs of voice, clearneſs and delicacy of pronunciation, propriety of accent, ſpirit, eaſe and harmony, are not alone ſufficient: we require beſides, a complete and perfect imitation; an expreſſion, which gives to each part of the work, to each period and to each verſe, the life, the paſſion and the

pathos

pathos it ought to have: in a word, the manner of reading ſhould be ſuch, as that the ear ſhould ſupply the place of all the other ſenſes. Thou ſhalt try thy ſkill this evening, by reading the feaſt of *Alcinous*. The abilities, which I flatter myſelf thou wilt diſcover, will determine my views, and thou wilt, probably, hereafter have reaſon to look upon the day on which *Hippias* was ſtruck with thee, as the happieſt of thy life. Having ſaid this, he quitted our youth, by which he ſpared himſelf the mortification of perceiving how little the new *Callias* was affected by the expectations this declaration had opened to him. The employment, indeed, of inchanting the ears of an Ionian audience was not, in *Agathon's* opinion, ſo honourable, that he ſhould on that account, eſteem himſelf particularly happy; beſides, there was ſomething in the tone of voice accompanying this diſcourſe, which diſpleaſed him, though he was not able to aſſign a reaſon for it.

His

His amazement, however, increaſed, the more he ſurveyed the houſe of the Sage, and he now clearly perceived, that whatever his maſter's principles were, the mortification of ſenſual appetites, of which he had formerly heard *Plato* ſpeak ſo eloquently at *Athens*, was by no means a part of his profeſſion. When he conſidered further the elegance of the table which philoſophy here kept, how magnificently ſhe was here ſerved, what attracting objects captivated her eyes, and what voluptuous harmony charmed her ears, while the ſide-board was covered with the choiceſt wines and the moſt deliciouſly intoxicating liquors of the Aſiatics, which ſeem to ſupply the ſenſes with freſh vigour for ſuch a variety of enjoyments: when he ſaw ſuch multitudes of beautiful young ſlaves, ſuch a number of dancers and players upon the lute, who excited admiration as much by their perſonal graces as by their ſkill in muſic: when he ſaw the dramatic dances, in which, merely

merely by a variety of attitudes, the ſtory of *Leda* or *Danae* was repreſented with ſuch ſpirit as would have enlivened the age of a *Neſtor:* when he conſidered alſo the voluptuous baths, the delightful gardens; in ſhort, when he ſaw every object which contributed to make the houſe of the ſage *Hippias* a temple of the moſt refined ſenſuality, his ſurprize was beyond deſcription. He was at a loſs to conceive what this Sybarite could have done, to have deſerved the appellation of a Sophiſt; or how he could venture to aſſume a title, which, according to *Callias's* ideas, he had as little pretenſions to as *Alexander* of *Pheræ*, to that of humane, or *Phryne*, to that of chaſte. He was ſo little ſatisfied with his own ſolution of this problem, that he was reſolved to take the firſt opportunity of propoſing it to *Hippias* himſelf.

CHAP.

CHAP. IV.

Which may induce ſome perſons to ſuſpect that this Hiſtory is a fiction.

AGATHON's employments left him ſo much leiſure that in a houſe where every thing ſeemed to inſpire mirth, he ſoon found the time hang heavy on his hands. But this was entirely his own fault, as he might have partaken of thoſe amuſements which are generally the chief occupation of young men of his age. The female ſlaves of the family were of ſo engaging a figure, as well as of ſo complying a temper, and were beſides ſo much prejudiced in his favour, that it certainly was neither the fear of a repulſe, or the want of perſonal attraction, which made the handſome *Callias* ſo reſerved and inſenſible.

SEVERAL imagined that his behaviour proceeded from his inexperience, they therefore ſpared no pains to remove the difficulties,

difficulties, which they fancied aroſe from his baſhfulneſs, and gave him every opportunity which could have made the moſt timorous youth bold and enterprizing. We muſt however confeſs, (whatever idea may be formed of our hero on this account) that he took as much pains to avoid theſe opportunities as they were anxious of throwing them in his way. If this ſhould ſeem to indicate that our hero was either too diffident of himſelf, or too well convinced of the ſuperior attractions of theſe female ſeducers, yet his conduct may admit of juſtification, if we conſider that he was not old enough to be a *Xenocrates*, or probably had entertained a prejudice, not without reaſon, againſt thoſe innocent freedoms, as they are called, which are admitted between the ſexes. However that may be, it is yet certain, that *Agathon's* extraordinary behaviour excited a ſuſpicion which upon every occaſion expoſed him to the keeneſt railleries from the other ſlaves, and from the

the females alſo; who were much piqued at his indifference, and gave him indirectly to underſtand, that they conſidered him as better fitted to guard the virtue of the ladies, than to put it to the proof. *Agathon*, however, found it moſt prudent not to engage in a diſpute in which he had reaſon to be apprehenſive that the pleaſure of being in the right, which frequently in the heat of contention gets the better of the moſt wary, might lead him to dangerous explanations. On ſuch occaſions, he cut ſo ſimple a figure, that his underſtanding was as likely to be called in queſtion as his perſonal abilities had already been. The contempt, to which, on this account, he was continually expoſed, contributed probably to make his ſituation irkſome in a houſe, where beſides this circumſtance every thing he either ſaw or heard tended to diſguſt him.

He was particularly fond of thoſe arts and ſciences, over which according to the opinions of the Greeks, the muſes preſide.

preſide. But the pictures which adorned the ſaloon and galleries of this houſe, were generally repreſentations equally looſe and immoral. The more exact imitations they were of nature, and the greater pains genius had taken to heighten the charms of nature itſelf, the leſs could he venture to fix his eyes upon them. The muſic too, which he conſtantly heard at the evening entertainments, was in his opinion, wholly different from that which is alone worthy of the muſes. That ſpecies of muſic was more particularly pleaſing to him, which ſoothed the violence of the paſſions, and at the ſame time excited the moſt agreeable emotions in the ſoul; or, that which ſang the praiſe of the immortals, with the moſt ardent tranſports of enthuſiaſm, and by which the heart is raviſhed into holy extaſy, and filled with awful ſenſe of the preſence of the divinity; and if it meant to expreſs the more delicate paſſions of tenderneſs and joy, he wiſhed

wiſhed it ſhould be the tenderneſs of innocence, or the captivating joy of ſimple nature. But a taſte wholly different prevailed in this houſe. The ſongs which *Agathon* heard were thoſe of the Syrens; ſongs which added ſuch graces to the voluptuous odes of the Teian poet, as would have been dangerous and ſeducing even had they proceeded from lips leſs attracting. They were ſuch, as by an expreſſive imitation of the different tones of paſſion, when it either flatters, ſighs, languiſhes, triumphs, or loſes itſelf in rapturous extaſies, excited a deſire to experience that, which in imitation only, appeared ſo agreeable. Here he was entertained with Lydian flutes, whoſe plaintive and amorous ſounds ſuited the laſcivious motions of the dancers, and gave ſuch preciſion and clearneſs to their attitudes, as left nothing for the imagination to conjecture. He heard ſymphonies, which plunged the ſoul into an inchanting forgetfulneſs of itſelf, and

having deprived it of its nobleſt powers, laid it open to ſenſual pleaſures, excited by all the influence of voluptuouſneſs pouring in upon it on every ſide. *Agathon* could not remain as inſenſible to theſe various ſcenes, where art and every means of inchantment conſpired to overcome the reſiſtance of virtue, as thoſe to whom they were familiar. The anxiety he felt on that account, whatever the Stoics may ſay, did him more honour, than *Hippias* and his friends could acquire from their eaſe and tranquility. He therefore found it neceſſary, as ſoon as he had finiſhed his taſk of reading *Homer*, to retire always into ſome ſecret place, where undiſturbed and in ſolitude, he might defeat the influence of thoſe impreſſions, which the noiſe and riotous feſtivity of this houſe, and the view of ſo many different objects had, during the courſe of the day, made upon his ſoul.

CHAP.

CHAP. V.

Enthuſiaſm of Agathon.

HIPPIAS's houſe was ſurrounded on the ſouthern ſide with large and ſpacious gardens, where every thing which art or riches could ſupply, had been laviſhed to ſpoil the elegant ſimplicity of nature by falſe and unnatural beauties. Fields blooming with flowers collected from all quarters of the earth, ſo that the ſpring ſeaſon of different climates was diſplayed in each month: groves of all kinds of odoriferous ſhrubs, walks of citron, olive-trees and cedars, whoſe length even the ſtrongeſt eye could not reach; thickets of fruit trees of every kind, labyrinths of myrtles and laurels, intwined with roſes of various colours. Here a thouſand marble ſtatues of the Naiades, ſo highly finiſhed, that they ſeemed animated and breathing, poured out ſmall murmuring ſtreams between the

flowers, or wantonly played off into tranſparent fountains: or ſeemed to repoſe themſelves under the ſpreading ſhades. All theſe beauties made the gardens of *Hippias* reſemble inchanted regions, the produce of a pictureſque and poetic fancy, which one cannot conceive to exiſt except in the imagination. Here it was that *Agathon* paſſed his moſt agreeable hours; here he recovered that tranquility of ſoul, which he infinitely preferred to the moſt delightful infatuation of ſenſual pleaſures; here, he could converſe with himſelf, and was ſurrounded with objects peculiarly adapted to the diſpoſition of his mind. But his ſingular turn of thought, which had ſo much diſappointed the expectation of *Hippias*, did not fail to leſſen the pleaſure he would here have enjoyed, when he conſidered that all theſe objects would have been far more beautiful, if art had not exerted all its powers to deprive nature of its eaſe and engaging ſimplicity.

Here

Here often by moon light, which he preferred to that of the ſun, he laid himſelf down in the ſhade, and recollected the happy days of his earlieſt youth, and the unſpeakable impreſſion which, every beautiful object, every new ſcene of nature had made upon his tender and as yet uncorrupted ſenſes; and thoſe delightful hours which in the tranſports of a firſt and innocent love, appeared but as ſo many moments. Theſe pleaſing recollections joined to the ſtillneſs of the night, the ſoft murmurings of the waters, the gentle breezes of the ſummer air, ſo effectually lulled his ſenſes, that the internal powers of his ſoul exerted themſelves with ſuperior force and energy. Then the charming proſpect of better days preſented itſelf to him, he ſaw all his wiſhes fulfilled, and felt himſelf happy for ſome moments; when theſe were paſſed, he perſuaded himſelf that theſe hopes would not have ſo ſenſibly affected him, or ſoothed him into ſuch a

calm and contented ſtate of mind, if they had been merely the ſportings of his fancy in the night, and were not rather internal preſages, which the ſoul, when diſengaged from the ſenſes, freely enjoys in ſilence, and by which it penetrates into futurity and into a more extenſive ſphere of action than that, which is bounded by the weakneſs of its corporeal connections.

IN ſuch a temper of mind was *Agathon*, when *Hippias*, invited by the ſweetneſs of a ſummer's evening to walk out, unexpectedly ſurprized him wholly immerſed in ſuch contemplations, which he the more freely indulged, imagining he was alone. *Hippias* ſtood ſome minutes before him, without being perceived. At length he accoſted him, and engaged him in a converſation, which entirely confirmed the ſuſpicion he had before entertained, that our hero was inclined to enthuſiaſm.

CHAP.

CHAP. VI.

Dialogue between Hippias and his Slave.

HIPPIAS.

CALLIAS, thou ſeemſt to be loſt in thought.

CALLIAS.

I imagined I was alone.

HIPPIAS.

Any other perſon in thy ſituation would have turned the freedom of my houſe to better advantage. And yet, perhaps, I may not be the leſs pleaſed with thee for this reſerve. But, let me aſk, on what ſubject thy thoughts were engaged?

AGATHON.

On the general ſilence around me; the radiance of the moon; the enchanting beauties of ſtill nature; the air perfumed with odoriferous exhalations of flowers; a thouſand agreeable ſenſations, whoſe pleaſing confuſion ſo totally poſſeſſed my

ſoul, that I was in a kind of extaſy: an extaſy, in which another ſcene of beauties, unknown before, preſented itſelf to my view. It was, indeed, but a moment, yet it was ſuch a moment as I would not have exchanged for years of the Perſian Monarch's life. (*Hippias* ſmiles.) This led me afterwards to reflect on the happineſs of thoſe ſpiritual beings, who, diſengaged from their groſs animal bodies, paſs thouſands of years in the contemplation of the intrinſic, incorruptible, eternal and divine excellence: years, which appear of no longer duration to them than a moment does to me. In ſuch conſideration was I deeply engaged when you ſurprized me.

HIPPIAS (*ſmiles.*)

Art thou ſtill aſleep, *Callias?* If not, thou haſt more talents than thou haſt occaſion for. I perceive thou haſt the faculty of dreaming while awake.

AGATHON.

There are, indeed, different kinds of dreams,

dreams, and the whole life of ſome men ſeems to be nothing but one continual dream. But if theſe are dreams, they are ſuch, at leaſt, as are more pleaſing to me than any thing I could have experienced at this time, waking.

HIPPIAS.

Perhaps thou imagineſt too, that thou ſhalt become one of thoſe ſpiritual beings whoſe happineſs thou doſt ſo highly extol.

AGATHON.

This is, indeed, what I hope, and without this hope my exiſtence would be of little value.

HIPPIAS.

Art thou then poſſeſſed of ſome ſecret for transforming corporeal bodies into ſpiritual; of ſome magic potion ſimilar to that, by which the *Medeas* and the *Circes* of the poets wrought ſo many wonderful tranſmutations?

AGATHON.

I do not underſtand thee, *Hippias*.

HIPPIAS.

I will then expreſs myſelf more clearly: If I do not miſunderſtand thee, doſt thou not fancy that thou alſo art a ſpirit incloſed in an animal body?

AGATHON.

And what other idea ſhould I have of myſelf?

HIPPIAS.

Are then quadrupeds, birds, fiſh and inſects, alſo ſpirits incloſed in an animal body?

AGATHON.

Probably they are.

HIPPIAS.

And plants?

AGATHON.

Probably theſe too.

HIPPIAS.

Thy hopes then are founded on mere probabilities. If it is probable that animals are not ſpirits, thou probably art not one either; for it is very certain, that thou art produced like animals;

thou

thou groweſt up as they do, ſubject to the ſame wants, endued with the ſame ſenſes and paſſions; thou art preſerved in the ſame manner, and doſt propagate thy ſpecies and dieſt juſt as they do, and art turned into water and earth as thou waſt before thou waſt born. If thou haſt any advantages over them, they conſiſt chiefly in a more beautiful form, in the being furniſhed with two hands, which enable thee to execute more than an animal can with his feet: in the ſtructure of certain organs, by which thou enjoyeſt the powers of ſpeech: and in a quicker underſtanding, which proceeds from the ſuperior delicacy of thy fibres, better adapted to receive impreſſions: an underſtanding, by which thou haſt learned from animals thoſe arts, the invention of which we are ſo proud of.

AGATHON.

Thy ideas of human nature are very different from mine.

HIPPIAS.

Probably. Becauſe I entertain no other ideas of it than thoſe which are derived to me from my ſenſes, and unprejudiced obſervation. I will, however, be ſo indulgent as to admit, that the principle which thinks within us, is eſſentially different from the body.—But, upon what doſt thou ground thy expectation, that this ſame ſpiritual principle will continue to think after thy body is deſtroyed? What proof haſt thou to eſtabliſh an opinion contradicted by ſo many other proofs? I will not aſſert that it is annihilated; but thy body loſes by death that form which conſtitutes it a body: What reaſon haſt thou, therefore, to hope that thy ſpirit will not alſo loſe that particular form which conſtitutes it a ſpirit?

AGATHON.

Becauſe I cannot poſſibly conceive that the firſt and ſupreme ſpirit, whoſe creatures, or whoſe emanations all other ſpirits

rits are, will deſtroy a being he has made capable of ſo much happineſs, as I have already experienced.

HIPPIAS.

But this is another PROBABLY? And how doſt thou come to the knowledge of this ſupreme ſpirit?

AGATHON.

From whence doſt thou know the *Phidias* who made this ſtatue of *Cupid?*

HIPPIAS.

Becauſe I ſaw him make it; for a ſtatue might, probably, be formed without the intervention of an artiſt.

AGATHON.

How ſo?

HIPPIAS.

An accidental concourſe of its ſmalleſt elementary parts, might in time produce it.

AGATHON.

What! Could an irregular and fortuitous motion produce a work of regularity and art?

HIP-

HIPPIAS.

Why not? In playing at dice 'tis not an uncommon thing to throw doublets. Is it not then equally poſſible that among ſeveral million of throws, one ſhould at laſt happen, by which a certain number of grains of ſand ſhould form themſelves into a circle? The application is eaſily made.

AGATHON.

I underſtand thee. But ſtill, it remains infinitely improbable that the fortuitous concourſe of the elements, ſhould have been able to produce only one of thoſe ſhells, of which there is ſuch an infinite number upon the ſhore: and even Eternity itſelf, ſeems not long enough to have formed our own globe in ſuch a manner, although this is but a ſmall particle, as it were, of the whole univerſe.

HIPPIAS.

It is ſufficient, that among the infinite number of fortuitous motions, which produce nothing either regular or durable

rable, one may poſſibly happen, by which a world might be formed. This ſets one probability againſt another, and therefore the proof upon which thou groundeſt thy opinion loſes its force.

AGATHON.

Juſt as much as an infinite weight would loſe of its heavineſs, by ſubſtracting from it a ſingle grain of ſand.

HIPPIAS.

Thou ſeemeſt to forget that an endleſs duration muſt be put into the other ſcale. However, I will not urge this objection as far as it might eaſily be carried; but of what advantage is this to thy opinion? Probably, the world has always been in the ſame general diſpoſition as it is now? Probably, it is the only Being which exiſts of itſelf?—Probably, that ſpirit of which thou ſpeakeſt, is forced by the eſſential properties of its nature to animate the univerſal ſyſtem according to the laws of an immutable neceſſity.—Admitting, however, that the world, as thou conceiveſt

conceiveſt, is the work of a free and intelligent cauſe, it may, probably, owe its origin not to one, but to many creators. In a word, *Callias*, thou muſt get the better of many poſſible chances, before thou canſt eſtabliſh, beyond a doubt, the exiſtence of this ſupreme ſpirit.

AGATHON.

I make uſe of a much more compendious method to ſatisfy myſelf in this particular. I ſee the ſun, therefore I conclude that it exiſts; I feel my own ſelf, therefore I exiſt. I perceive and am ſenſible of the ſupreme ſpirit, therefore it exiſts.

HIPPIAS.

A man in a dream, in a delirium, or in a fit of lunacy, ſees alſo; and yet what he ſees, is merely ideal, and has no real exiſtence.

AGATHON.

Becauſe the ſituation he is in, does not permit him to ſee things as they are.

HIP-

HIPPIAS.

How canſt thou then prove, that thou art not exactly in the caſe of the ſick man in this particular? The phyſicians will inform thee, that 'tis poſſible to be mad in one point only, and yet be very ſenſible in others, as all the ſtrings of a lute may be well in tune, except one. *Ajax* in his fury ſaw two ſuns and a double *Thebes*. What infallible criterion haſt thou to diſcern truth from the mere appearance of it; or to diſtinguiſh what thou really doſt perceive, from what thou only doſt imagine; or to determine the difference between what thou art ſenſible of, while in health, and what is repreſented to thee, in a diſtempered ſtate of thy body? And how wouldſt thou be able to form a judgment, if every ſenſation thou doſt experience, were only a deception, and if no object exiſted in nature, as thou doſt perceive it?

AGA-

AGATHON.

I am very little concerned about that point. For ſuppoſing the ſun is not in reality, what I ſee and feel it to be, yet its effects with regard to my ſight and perception are juſt the ſame; and that is ſufficient for me. The influence it has upon my other ſenſations is not, therefore the leſs real though it is not exactly what it appears to my ſenſes, or even though it does not exiſt at all.

HIPPIAS.

I ſhould be glad to hear what application thou wouldſt make of this?

AGATHON.

The ſenſe which I have of the exiſtence of the ſupreme ſpirit, has the ſame influence upon my internal ſyſtem, as that which I have of the exiſtence of the ſun, has upon my corporeal one.

HIPPIAS.

How ſo?

AGA-

AGATHON.

When my body is indiſpoſed, the abſence of the ſun increaſes my anxiety. The ſun-ſhine returning animates, enlivens, revives my body, and I find myſelf either perfectly recovered, or greatly relieved. The ſenſe of the all-animating ſpirit of the univerſe produces juſt the ſame effect upon my ſoul: it enlightens, comforts and encourages me: it diſſipates my anxiety, it animates my hope, and prevents my being unhappy in any ſituation, which without it would be inſupportable.

HIPPIAS.

I am therefore happier than thou, becauſe all theſe things are unneceſſary for my happineſs. Experience and reflection have freed me from prejudices: I enjoy every thing I wiſh for, and wiſh for nothing, which I have not the power of obtaining. Care and anxiety ſeldom affect me. I have few hopes, becauſe I am content with the enjoyment

ment of the preſent. My pleaſures are tempered by moderation, that I may enjoy them the longer, and whenever I feel a pain, I bare it with patience, as this is the ſureſt method to ſhorten its duration.

AGATHON.

Upon what principle then doſt thou ground thy virtue? What entertains, what animates it? How doſt thou get the better of the obſtacles which retard its progreſs? How doſt thou reſiſt the temptations which enſnare it, the contagion of example, and the tumult of the paſſions; and how doſt thou overcome that indolence which the ſoul ſo often experiences, whenever it attempts to raiſe itſelf above material objects?

HIPPIAS.

Young man, too long have I heard thine incoherent rhapſodies. In what a train of fancied ideas has the livelineſs of thy imagination involved thee! Thy ſoul is in a perpetual inchantment, alternately

ternately affected with tormenting and pleaſing dreams, and the true nature of things is as much a myſtery to thee, as the viſible form of the world is, to a man born blind. I pity thee, *Callias*. Thy figure and qualifications entitle thee to aſpire to every thing, which can render human life happy, thy peculiar turn of thought alone will make thee miſerable. Accuſtomed to behold ideal beings only all around thee, thou wilt never learn the art of making thy advantage of mankind. Thou wilt wander about, like an inhabitant of the moon, in a world which thou art as little acquainted with, as it is with thee; and thou wilt never be in thy proper ſituation, but in a deſert, or in the tub of *Diogenes*. What is to be done with a man who ſees ſpiritual beings? With one, whoſe virtue requires him to live in conſtant oppoſition to himſelf and to all the world? With one, who ſits down by moon light,

and

and reflects upon the happineſs of ſpirits diſengaged from their bodies? Believe me, *Callias*, I am acquainted with the world, and yet I ſee no ſpirits; thy philoſophy might, probably, ſerve inſtead of ſome other amuſement, to divert a ſet of indolent men; but it is a folly to attempt to put it in practice. Thou art yet young, and the retirement thou haſt lived in during the earlier part of thy life, added to the Eaſtern enthuſiaſm, which ſome idle Grecian adventurers have introduced amongſt us, from the Egyptians and Chaldeans, have given thy imagination a romantic turn; and the extreme ſenſibility of thy frame has increaſed this agreeable deluſion: to people of this caſt nothing they ſee is beautiful enough; nothing they feel ſufficiently agreeable; their imagination muſt create them other worlds, to ſatisfy the inſatiable deſires of their ſouls. But, this evil can yet be remedied, a natural

accuracy

accuracy of judgment, diſcovers itſelf even in the extravagancies of thy imagination, and only requires to be applied to other objects. A little docility and an unprejudiced examination of what I ſhall ſay to thee, are the only things neceſſary to cure thee of that ſtrange kind of phrenzy, which thou conſidereſt as wiſdom. Let me lead thee down from thoſe inviſible worlds, into a viſible and real one; it will appear ſtrange to thee at firſt, merely becauſe it is new, but when once thou art familiarized with it, thou wilt as little miſs thy aerial worlds, as a young man the toys which amuſed him in his infancy. This enthuſiaſm is the offspring of leiſure and retirement. A man who is extremely deſirous of agreeable ſenſations, and is deprived of the means of procuring himſelf real ones, is obliged to entertain himſelf with the conceits of his own imagination, and for want of better company, to converſe with

with the Sylphs. Experience will afford thee the beſt proof of this. I will unfold to thee, the myſteries of a philoſophy, which will lead thee to the enjoyment of every thing good and agreeable, that nature, art, ſociety, and even imagination (for man is not made to be at all times wiſe) can procure thee. If I am not greatly miſtaken in thee, the voice of reaſon, which thou doſt not ſeem to have ever heard, will recall thee from the devious path thou haſt wandered in, for if thou doſt continue thy journey in this ideal land of hope, thou wilt in the end, reap no other advantage than arriving at the certainty of having deceived thyſelf. It is now time to reſt, but the next leiſure morning I have, ſhall be dedicated to thee. I need not tell thee how much I am ſatisfied with the manner in which thou haſt diſcharged thy office, and only wiſh that thy turn of mind would ſo far agree with mine, that I might be enabled to give thee the trueſt

proofs

proofs of my friendſhip. In ſaying this *Hippias* went away, and left our *Agathon* in a ſituation which the reader will ſee in the following chapter.

CHAP. VII.

In which Agathon reaſons tolerably well for an Enthuſiaſt.

WE doubt not but that ſeveral readers of this hiſtory will imagine, that *Agathon* muſt have been not a little affected with this emphatical apoſtrophe of the ſage *Hippias*; or, at leaſt, that it muſt have given him ſome uneaſineſs. The age of *Hippias*, the reputation he had as a philoſopher, the poſitive manner in which he ſpoke, the appearance of truth diſplayed in his diſcourſe; and, what was of no leſs importance, the authority which his riches gave him,—all theſe circumſtances could not but diſ-

concert a man, who was ſo much his inferior in ſeveral reſpects, and beſides that, was his ſlave. But, they may be deceived.—*Agathon* had attended to all this emphatical ſpeech with a ſmile, which might have confounded all the Sophiſts in the world; if the vanity, or ſelf-partiality of the ſpeaker had ſuffered him to obſerve it. As ſoon, however, as he found himſelf alone, the ſmile which the Sophiſt's converſation had occaſioned, was immediately ſucceeded by a loud laugh, which he now no longer thought it neceſſary to reſtrain, leſt his diaphragm ſhould ſuffer from it. On the contrary, he renewed it as often as he reflected on the air, the tone, the geſtures, with which the ſage *Hippias* had accompanied ſome of the moſt expreſſive parts of his diſcourſe. At length this mechanical emotion gave way to more ſerious reflections, and he was almoſt ready to be diſpleaſed with himſelf, for being capable of laughing at the wide difference

there

there was between himſelf and *Hippias*. A man, who lives as *Hippias* does, muſt neceſſarily think as he does; and whoever thinks as *Hippias*, would certainly be miſerable if he did not live like him. And yet, continued he, I cannot help laughing, when I recall to mind the deciſive tone in which he ſpoke;—but I am not ſo much unuſed to this tone as *Hippias* may imagine: I have known tanners and porters, at *Athens*, who thought themſelves of conſequence enough to aſſume the ſame tone in haranguing the people. Thou fancieſt thou didſt ſay ſomething new, when thou didſt give to my way of thinking the name of enthuſiaſm; and didſt denounce to me, with a prophetic certainty, the fate it will bring upon me.—How much art thou deceived, if thou thinkeſt ſuch predictions will alarm me!—O, *Hippias*, what is it thou calleſt happineſs?—Thou wilt never be capable of knowing what happineſs is! That which thou calleſt happineſs, is no

more ſo, than the paſſions with which thy dancers inſpire thee can be called love. Thou calleſt my ſyſtem of happineſs enthuſiaſm; ſuffer me then ever to remain an enthuſiaſt, and do thou continue to be a Sage. Nature has refuſed thee that ſenſibility of ſoul, thoſe internal feelings, which make ſo great a difference between us. Thou art like a deaf man, who aſcribes to the effects of wine or madneſs, all the motions of joy, which the ſprightly note of *Damon*'s flute produces in thoſe who hear it; he would dance as well as they, if his ears were open. But in fact, the men of the world are not ſo much in the wrong, in conſidering us as in ſome degree lunatic; for who can expect that they ſhould think themſelves deficient in any thing which tends to complete the character of a man? I knew a young Athenian lady, to whom Nature had given a pretty foot to compenſate for the diſagreeableneſs of her perſon.—I ſhould be glad to know, ſaid ſhe,

ſhe, one day to a friend of her's, what the young fops ſee in the conceited *Timandra*, that they ſcarce pay any attention to any other woman but her—I allow ſhe has a fine complexion; her features are tolerable, her eyes are lively enough, and ſhe takes great pains to make amends to her admirers for the defects of her perſon, by the diſcovery of certain other beauties.—But then, what ſort of a foot has ſhe?—Who has any pretentions to beauty without a pretty foot? You are in the right, anſwered her friend, who was indebted to Nature for nothing beautiful but a ſmall ear,—one muſt have ſuch a foot as yours to be thought handſome: but what think you of her ears, *Hermia*? Gracious *Diana*, they would do honour to a Faun's head! Men are juſt the ſame, and it would be abſurd to find fault with them for it. The nightingale ſings; the raven croaks: and he would be no raven if he did not think he croaked well.—He is ſtill in the right when he finds

fault with the nightingale's croaking; but it is true, he goes too far when he turns the nightingale into ridicule for not croaking ſo well as he.—The nightingale is alſo equally to blame in finding fault with the raven for not ſinging ſo well as ſhe does.—He does not ſing, it is true; but he croaks very well, and that is ſufficient for him. But, *Hippias* is concerned for me; he pities me, and wiſhes to make me as happy as he is.—That is certainly generous. He has diſcovered that I have an inclination for the *Beautiful*, and am not inſenſible to the allurements of pleaſure. This diſcovery was obvious enough; but he is much deceived in the concluſion he has drawn from it. The prudent *Ulyſſes* preferred the ſmall barren iſland of *Ithaca*, where he was free, and his aged wife, to whom he had been married twenty years, to the inchanted iſland of the beauteous *Calypſo*, where he would have been immortal and a ſlave. Juſt ſo the enthuſiaſt *Agathon*, with all his taſte

taſte for the *Beautiful*, and his inclination to pleaſure, even without a moment's reflection, would rather live concealed in the tub of *Diogenes*, than be in poſſeſſion of the palace, the gardens, the ſeraglio, and the riches of the ſage *Hippias*, and become *Hippias* himſelf.

For ever ſoliloquies, methinks, I hear the reader ſay! This, at leaſt, is one which could not be avoided. *Agathon* had no one to converſe with but himſelf; for lovers only talk to the trees and nymphs. We muſt, therefore, excuſe this propenſity of our hero; and we may the more readily conſent to it, as *Horace*, who was undoubtedly one of the politeſt men of his age, has not been aſhamed of acknowledging that he frequently converſed with himſelf.

CHAP. VIII.

Preparation for what follows.

AGATHON had not lived long enough in the world to be as well acquainted with life and manners, as *Theophraſtus* was, at the time he was obliged to leave it. But what he wanted in experience was ſupplied by the natural talent he poſſeſſed, of penetrating into the ſoul; which was greatly improved by the attention with which, whenever he had an opportunity, he always obſerved the actions of men and the different ſcenes of life. For this reaſon, his laſt converſation with *Hippias* inſtead of improving him, only ſerved to confirm the ſuſpicion he had for ſome time entertained of the Sophiſt's character and turn of thought. He could, therefore, eaſily conjecture, what ſpecies of ſecret philoſophy that was, from which he had promiſed him ſuch great advantages.

Not-

Notwithſtanding this, he wiſhed for the interview, partly out of curioſity, to ſee *Hippias's* principles reduced into a ſyſtem; partly on account of the amuſement he expected from his eloquence: an amuſement, nearly ſimilar to that, which an artful juggler gives us, when he makes us believe, that we ſee what we do not, without at the ſame time, letting an obſerving man perceive ſo much of his art, as to give him the leaſt ſuſpicion that he is deceived. In ſuch a diſpoſition of mind, ſo very different from that docility, which *Hippias* required, did *Agathon* find himſelf, when a few days after, he was called upon to attend the Sophiſt in his chamber, where he waited for him reclined upon a couch, and upon *Agathon's* entrance, ordered him to ſit down by him, and breakfaſt with him. This complaiſance was in *Hippias's* opinion, a neceſſary ſtep to what was to follow; and that he might the better accompliſh his deſign, he had made choice of

one of his handſomeſt female ſlaves to attend at breakfaſt. Indeed, the figure of this nymph, and the pleaſing manner in which ſhe performed her office, made her attendance ſomewhat dangerous for a philoſopher of *Agathon's* age. Unfortunately, the little ſorcereſs, to revenge herſelf of the indifference with which *Agathon* had hitherto treated her eaſy forwardneſs, had upon this occaſion made uſe of every artifice, to make him more ſenſible of the value of the happineſs he had neglected. Her malice prompted her to appear in ſo elegant, ſo modeſt, and at the ſame time, ſo alluring a morning dreſs, that *Agathon* himſelf could not help believing, that if the graces themſelves would have appeared in any dreſs, they could not have fixed upon one, which preſerved ſo becoming a medium, between that which is peculiar to them, and that which they uſually appear in. To ſay the truth, the roſe-coloured garment flowing about her was rather like

that,

that, which *Petronius* calls a *Ventus textilis & nebula Linea*, than a dreſs, which was to conceal any thing from the ſight; the leaſt motion diſcovered charms which were the more ſeducing, as they were partly concealed, and left the imagination more to conceive than the eye to ſee. Notwithſtanding this, our hero would, probably, have got the better of this artifice, even if he had not at firſt ſight ſeen through the deſigns of *Hippias* and the beautiful *Cyane*, for ſo was this young female called. This diſcovery threw him into a kind of perplexity, which grew the more remarkable by the pains he took to conceal it; his confuſion betrayed itſelf by his bluſhes, he threw himſelf into all kinds of affected attitudes, and looked upon every picture in the room one after another, to conceal his emotion. But this was all in vain: the artful *Cyane* always contrived ſome new pretence for attracting his wandering looks to herſelf. Yet the triumph ſhe at that inſtant enjoy-

ed was very ſhort. However ſuſceptible the eyes of *Agathon* were, yet were they not more ſo than his moral ſenſe; and any object which offended the latter, could not produce ſo agreeable an impreſſion on his ſight, as not to be overcome by the diſagreeable ſenſation it excited in his moral ſenſe. The advances of the beautiful *Cyane*, her artifices, and the wantonneſs ſhe diſplayed in her whole perſon, were ſo diſguſting as to efface all her charms, and made him ſo indifferent, that if ſhe had carried them a little further, they probably, like *Meduſa's* head in the fable, would have been capable of turning him into ſtone. The eaſe and indifference which he then aſſumed, was too viſible to eſcape *Cyane's* notice, and he took care to convince her by a certain look, and a ſmile, the meaning of which was evident, that ſhe had triumphed too ſoon. This behaviour was ſo injurious to her charms, that ſhe could not but look upon it as the effect of conſtraint; the

the reſiſtance ſhe found, obliged her to exert all her arts to gain the victory. But, the ſtrength of her adverſary made her at laſt deſpair, and ſhe had ſcarce command enough over herſelf, to hide the mortification which her vanity ſuffered upon this occaſion.

Hippias, who for a long time had diverted himſelf in ſilence with this ſcene, judged that it would not be an eaſy taſk, to captivate the reaſon of a man, whoſe heart ſeemed ſo well prepared even on the weakeſt ſide. But this obſervation confirmed his opinion with regard to the method he ſhould make uſe of with his new ſcholar; and as he was more fully convinced of the efficacy of his ſyſtem, than ever a *Bonze* was of the power of thoſe amulets, which he diſtributes to his thankful believers, ſo he doubted not, that *Agathon* would be more eaſily gained over to his opinion, by a frank and open explanation, than by any rhetorical arts, which

which he ſometimes employed ſucceſsfully enough, with men of weak capacities. As ſoon as breakfaſt was over, and the abaſhed *Cyane* had retired, he began to entertain *Agathon* with different diſcourſes, preparatory to that remarkable one, which our readers will thank us for giving them at large, more eſpecially, as we have been aſſured by connoiſſeurs, that the myſtic ſenſe of that ſpeech far exceeded in its importance, the literal one; and that the true and infallible proceſs of diſcovering the philoſopher's ſtone was concealed under it.

AGATHON.

AGATHON.

BOOK III.

CHAPTER I.

Preparation to a very intereſting Diſcourſe.

WHEN we reflect, my dear *Callias*, upon the actions of men, it ſeems indeed, that the only ſcope of all their cares and anxieties is to make themſelves happy; but the ſmall number of thoſe who either enjoy real happineſs, or even think that they do, evidently proves, that they are ignorant of the means of becoming happy, and even if they ſhould be in a ſtate of good fortune, they know not how to uſe it ſo as to attain what is generally called

called happineſs. How many are there who, even in the higheſt dignities, in the midſt of fortune and pleaſure, are as miſerable as thoſe who are reduced to the greateſt diſtreſſes, and in a ſtate of ſlavery and oppreſſion. Labour and induſtry has freed ſome from this laſt neceſſitous condition, who imagined that the only cauſe of their unhappineſs was the want of riches: but experience has taught them, that if there is an art which can procure to us the means of happineſs, there is ſtill one much more difficult and more rarely to be met with—the art of making a proper uſe of theſe means. For this reaſon it has been the conſtant employment of the wiſeſt men of all ages, by the connection of both theſe arts, to arrive at what may very properly be called the art of living happily; in the practical exerciſe of which, according to my ideas, conſiſts that wiſdom which ſo ſeldom falls to the lot of mortals. I call it an art, becauſe it depends upon the ready

application

application of certain rules, which are only to be attained by conſtant practice; but it preſuppoſes, like all other arts, a certain ſhare of capacity, which is the gift of nature, and imparted only to a few. Some men ſeem, indeed, capable of no greater happineſs than that of an oyſter; and if they have a ſoul, ſeem to make no other uſe of it, than to preſerve their body, for ſome time, from corruption. A more conſiderable, and perhaps the greateſt part of mankind, are not in this condition; but as they are deficient in ſtrength of mind, and in a certain delicacy of ſentiment, their life, for this reaſon, like that of other beaſts, is divided between pleaſures which they know not either how to chuſe, or how to enjoy, and pains which they can neither bear nor avoid. Caprice and paſſions are the chief ſprings of theſe human machines, and expoſe them alike to an endleſs variety of evils, which though they are only the effect of a deluded imagination,

nation, and on that account, perhaps, leſs ſevere, yet are they for the ſame reaſon more laſting and incurable, than thoſe which nature impoſes upon us. Such men are incapable of any ſettled or durable ſatisfaction, incapable of enjoying any kind of happineſs. Their joys are momentary, and the reſt of their exiſtence is either a ſtate of real ſuffering, or an endleſs ſucceſſion of confuſed wiſhes, a perpetual alternative of fear and hope, of fancies and deſires: In ſhort, a reſtleſs anxiety which knows no bounds, has no fixed object in view, and, therefore, can neither afford the means of obtaining any good, or permit them to enjoy that which they already poſſeſs. It appears, therefore, impoſſible for any man to attain to that calm ſtate of enjoyment and content which conſtitutes happineſs, without a peculiar delicacy of ſentiment, which, with more refined perceptions, enables us, in a more agreeable manner, to paſs through life in an

enlarged

enlarged ſphere of action; or, without that ſtrength of ſoul which puts it in our power to ſhake off the yoke of fancy and opinion, and gives us an abſolute command over our paſſions. In fact, that man can only be deemed happy who knows not only how to free himſelf entirely from thoſe evils, which exiſt merely in imagination; but alſo to avoid or leſſen thoſe to which human life has made him ſubject; to blunt the keenneſs of their edge by making the beſt uſe of every good, nature has made us capable of participating, and to enjoy what he already poſſeſſes in the moſt agreeable manner to himſelf: this happy mortal is, in my opinion, the only wiſe man.

If I am not miſtaken in thee, *Callias*, nature has as richly endowed thee with every capacity of happineſs, as with all thoſe ſuperior qualifications, the prudent uſe of which, generally procures the favours of fortune. Notwithſtanding this

thou

thou art neither happy nor doſt thou ſeem ever likely to become ſo, till thou haſt learned to make a different uſe of thoſe advantages than thou haſt hitherto done. Thou doſt exert all the powers of thy ſoul to render thy heart inſenſible to true pleaſure. Thou doſt employ thy ſenſibility about incorporeal beings, which thou ſeeſt only in imagination, and enjoyeſt only in a dream. The pleaſures which nature has allotted to all men, are real pains to thee; ſince thou art forced to deprive thyſelf of them. Thou, on the contrary, doſt expoſe thyſelf to evils nature has taught us to avoid; while inſtead of paſſing thy life in ſome uſeful occupation, thou doſt dream it away in ſoft illuſions, with which thou doſt endeavour to ſupply the abſence of real pleaſures. Thy misfortune, my dear *Callias*, ariſes from an imagination, which preſents her objects to thee in ſuch tranſcendent brightneſs, that ſhe deceives thy heart and ſpreads a falſe light over every object which really exiſts: a poetical

tical imagination which employs itſelf in diſcovering more perfect beauties, more enlivening pleaſures than are to be found in nature. An imagination to which we are indebted for a *Homer* an *Alcamenes* and a *Polygnotus*; and which was deſigned to improve and refine our joys and not to be the director of our lives. The only thing neceſſary to make thee wiſe is, to ſubſtitute ſound ſenſe in the place of this fanatical enchantreſs, and cool reflection inſtead of that ſentimental turn, which ſo frequently miſleads us. Imagine for a moment, that thou art now firſt ſetting out in ſearch of happineſs; inquire of nature, attend to her anſwer, and follow the path ſhe ſhall indicate.

CHAP.

CHAP. II.

Theory of agreeable Senſations.

OF whom then can we inquire with more propriety, if we want to be inſtructed in the art of living well, than of Nature?—of the Gods? But the God, if there is one, muſt either be Nature itſelf, or the author of Nature: in either caſe, the voice of Nature is the voice of God.—She is the common inſtructor of all beings; ſhe teaches every animal, from the elephant to the inſect, what is beneficial or hurtful to its particular conſtitution. Every animal needs only to obey her inſtinct, to be as happy as his condition will allow: it is ſhe who incites him, either by the ſoothing calls of pleaſure, or by the impatient cravings of want, or the ſevere impulſes of pain, to what is proper for him; who leads him to what eceſſary for the preſervation of his life and ſpecies; or warns him

him to avoid whatever threatens the deſtruction of his being. Should man alone be deprived of this parental care; or, can he alone be miſtaken in liſtening to that voice, which addreſſes itſelf to all beings?—Or, rather, is not the inattention and diſobedience to her kind admonitions, the only true reaſon why, among the infinite variety of animated beings, man alone is miſerable.

NATURE has impreſſed upon all her works a certain ſimplicity, which conceals their laboured diſpoſitions, and a ſtrict regularity under the appearance of eaſe and unaffected grace. She has alſo ſtamped the ſame characters upon the laws ſhe has preſcribed to lead men to happineſs. They are all ſimple, eaſily obſerved, and tend directly, and with certainty, to the end they have in view. The art of being happy, would have been the moſt common, as it is the eaſieſt of all arts, if men had not accuſtomed themſelves to imagine, that great deſigns

ſigns can never be executed without great efforts. It appeared to them too ſimple, that any thing which Nature could teach them, even by the mouth of Wiſdom itſelf, could be collected from theſe three maxims: ſatisfy all thy wants, enjoy every ſenſual pleaſure, and avoid, as much as poſſible, every painful ſenſation. And yet, with a little attention, thou wilt be convinced, that the moſt complete happineſs mankind is capable of, is included within theſe three rules.

THERE have been men, fooliſh enough to take great pains to examine, whether pleaſure is a good, and pain an evil. There have been others ſtill more abſurd, who poſitively maintained that pain was no evil, and pleaſure no good. But what is ſtill more ridiculous, the defenders of both theſe ſyſtems have found men weak enough, to look upon them as wiſe men. Pleaſure is no good, ſay they, becauſe ſome inſtances may occur, in which pain is a greater good.—Pain

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alſo is no evil, becauſe it is ſometimes better than pleaſure. Does this playing upon words deſerve an anſwer? What would that condition be which ſhould ſubject us to conſtant, uninterrupted pain in the higheſt poſſible degree? If ſuch a ſituation is the greateſt poſſible evil, then is pain alſo an evil. Let theſe babblers amuſe themſelves by thus ſporting with words, and giving them what ſignification they pleaſe. Nature has decided this queſtion, if it really is one, in ſuch a manner, as to leave no room for doubt. Who had not rather be annihilated, than be perpetually miſerable? Who would not rather look upon a beautiful, than upon a diſguſting object? Who would not rather hear the linnet ſing, than the owl ſhriek? Who does not prefer an agreeable taſte or ſmell, to a diſagreeable one? And would not even the continent *Callias*, rather repoſe on a bed of flowers, incircled in the roſy arms of ſome beautiful nymph than be incloſed in the burning brazen idol,

to which, it is ſaid, ſome people of *Syria*, from a principle of devotion, ſacrifice their children? There ſeems to be as little doubt, that pain and pleaſure are ſo incompatible, that one ſingle nerve if affected with pain, is ſufficient to make us inſenſible to the allurements of all kinds of pleaſures, even when combined together. An exemption from every kind of painful ſenſation is, therefore, inconteſtably a neceſſary condition of happineſs; but as this is only a negative happineſs, it is not ſo properly itſelf a good, as a ſituation in which we are capable of enjoying that good. It is the continuance of this enjoyment alone which produces what is called happineſs.

It is not to be denied, that all kinds and degrees of pleaſure are not equally good. Nature alone has a right to point out to us the pleaſures ſhe has deſigned for us. However infinite the number of agreeable ſenſations appears to be, yet it is pretty evident, that they either belong

long to the pleaſures of the ſenſes, or of the imagination; or, to a third claſs, which reſults from the union of the two former. The pleaſures of the imagination are either the recollections of ſenſual pleaſures formerly taſted, or the means of adding to the enjoyment of them; or, they are agreeable fictions and dreams, conſiſting either in a new arbitrary combination of pleaſing ideas, derived from the ſenſes, or in a vain fanciful heightening of every degree of pleaſure before experienced. All pleaſures, therefore, to ſpeak with accuracy, are in reality ſenſual; becauſe they cannot ariſe from any thing, but from ſenſual repreſentations, either immediately, or mediately conveyed by the imagination.

Philoſophers talk of the pleaſures of the ſoul, of the pleaſures of the heart, and of the pleaſures of virtue: all theſe, are either pleaſures of the ſenſes, or of the imagination, or they do not exiſt. Why do we read *Homer* with infinitely

greater delight than *Heraclitus?* Becauſe, the poetry of the former repreſents to us a groupe of images which inchant our fancy, either by the peculiar beauty of the object, by the livelineſs of the colouring, or by a contraſt, which introducing a few oppoſite ſentiments, heightens the ſatisfaction of the reader, and raiſes the moſt agreeable ſenſations.—On the contrary, the dry treatiſes of that philoſopher preſent us only with a ſeries of phraſes expreſſing abſtracted ideas; of which, the imagination cannot form any conception, without the utmoſt labour, and a conſtant attention to avoid a total confuſion of ſo many indiſtinct images: if thoſe can be called images; which with reſpect to their real object in nature, are ſcarcely ſo much as a ſhadow is to the body which forms it. There are, it is true, abſtracted ideas, with which ſome enthuſiaſtic ſouls are enraptured; But why are they ſo? Merely becauſe their imagination has the art of realizing them. Examine all

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the pleaſing ideas of this kind, and you will find, however immaterial and ſpiritual they may appear, that the pleaſure they give the ſoul, ariſes from the ſenſual repreſentations which accompany them. Whatever pains thou takeſt, thou wilt find it impoſſible to repreſent to thyſelf the Gods without form, without ſplendor, or without ſomething which can affect the ſenſes. Take the *Jupiter* of *Homer* and *Phidias*, the image of a *Hercules*, or a *Theſeus*, as our imagination uſually repreſents theſe heroes to us: the ideas of a celeſtial brightneſs, of a beauty more than human, of an ambroſial perfume, will imperceptibly intrude themſelves upon the idea, which thou doſt in vain endeavour to form of them. Then wilt thou find that thou art ſtill attached to the earth, though thy imagination may have tranſported thee into the empyreal regions. Are the pleaſures of the heart leſs ſenſual? They are highly ſo. When they are carried to a certain

degree, they communicate a voluptuous glow to our whole ſyſtem, they quicken the motion of the blood, enliven the play of the fibres, and impart to our whole machine a kind of ſatisfaction, which the ſoul more readily partakes of, as her own operations are thereby agreeably facilitated. Admiration, love, deſire, hope, pity and every tender affection, produce this effect in a certain degree, and are the more delightful, the nearer they approach to that pleaſure, which our anceſtors have thought worthy of placing among the Gods under the perſonal form of beauty, from the enjoyment of which it ariſes. The man, whom the ſight of his friend has never thrown into ſuch tranſports, as reſemble the raptures of love, has no right to talk of the pleaſures of friendſhip. What is that compaſſion, which excites us to benevolence? Who are ſuſceptible of this paſſion, but men of the greateſt ſenſibility, who cannot bear the ſight, nor hear the

the plaintive cries of miſery and pain; and who, at the inſtant they relieve the diſtreſſes of the miſerable, experience nearly the ſame pleaſure as they would have done, had they themſelves been the perſons relieved? If compaſſion is not a voluptuous ſenſation, why does nothing affect us ſo ſenſibly as ſuffering beauty? Why does the afflicted *Phædra* on the ſtage, draw tears of compaſſion from our eyes, whilſt diſtreſſed deformity in real life, only creates diſguſt? And are the pleaſures of benevolence and philanthrophy leſs ſenſual? Attend to what paſſes in thine own mind upon conſidering the contraſt of figures in the diſtreſſed and joyful city, repreſented by *Homer* on the ſhield of *Achilles*; and thou wilt find the ſolution of this queſtion. Thoſe only, in whom the moſt lively tranſports are excited by the enjoyment of pleaſure, are capable of being affected to ſuch a degree at the ſmiling picture of a general joy and feſtivity, as to wiſh that others alſo

might partake of it. The pleaſure too of benevolence will always have ſome correſpondence with that, which the ſight of a chearful countenance, of a lively dance, or of ſome public diverſion produces, and will always be the ſtronger, the more general the ſcene is, which occaſions it. The greater too the number of the perſons is, who are rejoicing, and the more various their pleaſures, the more will the heart of theſe men overflow with joy, who are all ſenſibility, tenderneſs and ſoul. Let, us therefore, *Callias*, confeſs, that all the pleaſures which nature offers to us are ſenſual; and that the moſt elevated, abſtracted and refined imagination cannot ſupply us with any others, than thoſe we can enjoy far more perfectly from cups incircled with roſes, and from the lips of the beautiful *Cyane*.

It is true, there are pleaſures which at firſt ſight ſeem to be an exception to my principles. We may call them artificial,

artificial, becauſe we are not indebted to nature for them, but to a certain compact of human ſociety, by which, whatever produces this pleaſure, has obtained the appellation of good. But, the leaſt reflection is ſufficient to convince us, that theſe things afford us no other kind of pleaſure, than that we receive from the poſſeſſion of money; which we ſhould be apt to look upon with indifference, if it did not ſupply us with the means of procuring every real pleaſure we can obtain by it. Of this kind, is that which the ambitious man feels from the marks of that ſeeming reſpect and ſubmiſſion paid to him, which are agreeable to him, as they are proofs of the authority and power he has over other men. An Eaſtern tyrant cares little for the eſteem of his ſubjects; a ſlaviſh and abject ſubmiſſion is all he wants. The man, on the contrary, whoſe happineſs depends upon his equals, is under the neceſſity of courting their favour. But, the tyrant is only

pleaſed with this ſubmiſſion, and the republican with this eſteem, becauſe they are thereby enabled and furniſhed with opportunities of more eaſily ſatisfying their wants and inclinations, which are the immediate ſources of pleaſure. Why is *Alcibiades* ambitious? *Alcibiades* is in purſuit of a reputation, which may ſerve to caſt a veil over his extravagancies, his pride, his train of purple, his entertainments and his gallantries; a reputation, which may make the Athenians bear to ſee upon the ſhield of their General, the image of *Cupid* armed with *Jupiter*'s thunder; and ſo far dazzled the eyes of the Spartan Queen, that ſhe conſiders it as an honour to be thought his concubine. Without theſe advantages authority and fame would have been as indifferent to him, as a heap of counters to a Corinthian uſurer. But, if it be true that nature has allowed us no pleaſures but thoſe of the ſenſes; what then, will it be ſaid, is eaſier, or requires leſs art

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deſign than to be happy? "How little does nature aſk to be ſatisfied?" Uncultivated nature, it is true, requires but little. Her ſimplicity is her portion. Exerciſes which enliven the body; food which appeaſes hunger; a woman, handſome or otherwiſe, to ſatisfy the impatience of deſire; a cavern to ſhelter from the weather; a ſhady bank to ſleep on; theſe are the only neceſſary things for a ſavage, who will never imagine, in the courſe of eighty or an hundred years, that it is poſſible to want any thing elſe. The pleaſures of imagination and taſte are not for him; and his enjoyments are not ſuperior to thoſe of other animals. He is happy, becauſe he does not think himſelf miſerable; but yet he is not ſo, if compared with the man, to whom the arts of genius and taſte, have diſcovered the moſt agreeable manner of ſatisfying the ſeveral wants of nature; to whom they have procured an infinite variety of pleaſures of the ſenſes and the imagination,

on, of which nature, in the rude and uncultivated ſtate ſhe is repreſented to us in former times, has no idea. This compariſon, it is true, only takes place in a ſtate of ſociety, which, after a long ſeries of ages, has, at laſt, attained a certain degree of perfection. But, in ſuch a civilized ſtate, every thing which the ſavage deſires not, becauſe it is unknown to him, becomes a want; and *Diogenes* could not have been happy at *Corinth*, had he not been a fool. Certain poets have dreamt of a golden age, of an *Arcadia*, and of a pleaſing kind of paſtoral life, which according to their ideas, ſhould preſerve a medium between nature in its rude ſtate, and the manners of a rich, poliſhed and refined people. They have diveſted nature of all thoſe beauties which ſerve to embelliſh it, and to this ideal being of their own creating, they have given the name of adorned nature. But, beſides that this adorned nature has never really exiſted

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in that naked ſimplicity, which they attribute to her; who does not perceive that the golden age of the poets, differs as much from that, which the arts have improved and enriched with every thing genius could poſſibly invent to preſerve us from ſatiety in the midſt of uninterrupted pleaſure, as the life of the moſt ſavage Sogdian differs from the picture of that golden age? If it is more agreeable to live in a convenient cottage, than in a hollow tree; it is ſtill much more ſo, to inhabit a ſpacious manſion furniſhed with the moſt refined and voluptuous conveniencies of life, and ornamented with images of pleaſure which ſtrike the eye on every ſide. If a *Phyllis* decked out with ribbons and flowers, is more attracting, than a dirty rough female ſavage, muſt not one of our own beauties, whoſe native charms are heightened by well diſpoſed and glittering ornaments, be as much more pleaſing than a *Phyllis*.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

The Doctrine of a true Materialiſt, with regard to ſpiritual Beings.

WE have conſulted nature, *Callias*, to know wherein conſiſts the happineſs which ſhe has deſtined for us, and we have heard her anſwer. A life free from painful ſenſations; the moſt agreeable manner of ſatisfying all our natural wants, and the continual enjoyment of all thoſe pleaſures, with which the imagination, invention and art can gratify our ſenſual appetites.—This is all man can require; and if there is a more refined ſpecies of happineſs than this, we may, at leaſt be certain, that it does not belong to us, as we are incapable of forming any ideas of it. It is true, the enthuſiaſtic worſhippers of the Gods, flatter themſelves with a future happineſs, which the ſoul is to obtain after the deſtruction of the body. The ſoul, ſay they, was formerly

formerly a friend and companion of the Gods; ſhe, like them too, was immortal, and accompanied, as *Plato* in imitation of *Homer* expreſſes it, the winged chariot of *Jupiter*, that, with other immortal beings, ſhe might contemplate the eternal beauties, with which the immenſe ſpaces above the heavenly ſpheres are filled. A war which aroſe amongſt the inhabitants of the inviſible world, made her ſhare the ſame fate with the conquered: ſhe was thruſt out of heaven, impriſoned in an animal body, and being deprived of her former felicity, was condemned to a ſtate of pain and miſery, to expiate her former guilt. The endleſs deſire and inſatiable thirſt after happineſs, which ſhe cannot find in any earthly good, is, for her torment, the only thing which ſhe retains of her former condition. Nor is it poſſible, that ſhe ſhould ever attain to that felicity which alone can ſatisfy her, till ſhe is raiſed again to her original ſtate, the

pure

pure element of ſpirits. She is, therefore, ſuſceptible of no other happineſs, till death, but what ſhe can receive from a voluntary abſtraction from all earthly objects, a mortification of all the paſſions, and a privation of all ſenſual pleaſures. When ſeparated from the body, ſhe will then only be fit for the contemplation of thoſe divine eſſences, in which ſpiritual beings find their only proper nouriſhment, and that perfect felicity of which ſenſual men can have no conception. In this manner only can ſhe, after having paſſed through different degrees of purification, and purged from every thing which is animal or corporeal, be raiſed again to the empyrean regions, live with the Gods, and paſs an eternity in the contemplation of the only intrinſic and eternal Good: an eternity, as boundleſs as the delights the immortals enjoy.

I DOUBT not indeed, *Callias*, that there are men, whoſe melancholy turn of mind is worked up high enough to perſuade them

them of the reality of theſe ideas. Nothing is eaſier than for young people, of quick ſenſibility and heated imaginations, added to a ſolitary manner of life, and the privation of certain objects and enjoyments, which would contribute to leſſen this exuberant fire, to let themſelves be carried away by theſe extravagant chimæras. They, are indeed, well adapted to delude the imagination, eager after every pleaſure, by a kind of delight, which is the more lively, as the inchanting phantoms it repreſents, are more abſtracted and confuſed. But whether theſe dreams have any reality or truth, except in the brains of thoſe who firſt gave them birth, or whoſe imagination is lively enough to follow them, is a queſtion, which, if examined before the tribunal of reaſon, would not turn out to their advantage. The leſs indeed men know, the more inclined are they to preſumption and belief. To what then, but to the ignorance and ſuperſtition of ancient times, do the

Nymphs

Nymphs and Fauns, the Naiades and Tritons, the Furies and the Ghosts of departed bodies, owe their imaginary existence? The more we become acquainted with this material world, so much narrower do we find the bounds of the spiritual one. I will not now inquire, whether it is probable that the priesthood, which has always maintained so distinguished a rank among men, had soon enough discovered what great advantages might be derived from the propensity men have to the marvellous; and from their hopes and fear, which are the strongest of their passions. We will abide by the fact itself. Upon what grounds is the sublime theory we have been speaking of founded? — Who has ever seen those Gods, and those spiritual beings, whose existence it asserts? — What man can remember that he has ever flown into the etherial regions without a body; accompanied the winged chariot of *Jupiter*, and drank nectar with the Gods? — What

ſixth or ſeventh ſenſe are we poſſeſſed of, to diſtinguiſh the reality of thoſe beings, with which the world of ſpirits is ſuppoſed to be peopled?—Are they our internal ſenſes?—What are theſe, but the power the imagination has of imitating the effects of our external ſenſes?—What object can the internal eye of one who is born blind perceive?—What ſound can the internal ear of one who is born deaf be ſenſible of?—Or, what are thoſe ſcenes, in which the imagination ſo irregularly wanders, but new combinations of ideas, which ſhe connects together, much in the ſame manner as a young virgin forms a garland from the different flowers which compoſe a parterre; or, higher degrees of what the ſenſes have really experienced, but which no one has ever yet been able to repreſent clearly to himſelf?—What do we perceive of that ethereal ſplendor, or that ambroſial fragrance of *Homer*'s Gods?—We ſee, indeed, if I may be allowed the expreſſion, the

the ſhadow of a certain ſplendor in our fancy?—We imagine that we find a delightful odour, but we are utterly ſtrangers to any ethereal ſplendor or ambroſial fragrance. — In a word, deprive only the authors of theſe ſupernatural ſyſtems, of the uſe of material and ſenſible objects, and all their fancied worlds, to employ an expreſſion of their own, will ſuddenly return again into the womb of night, from whence they were originally taken. We can have no better reaſon for ſuſpecting the truth of this theory, than the method it preſcribes, to obtain that myſterious happineſs; namely, by the ſacrifice of every thing which Nature and our ſenſes offer to us.—We muſt withdraw ourſelves from viſible objects, to ſee inviſible ones — We muſt forfeit our ſenſations, that we may indulge ourſelves in the more lively viſions of fancy. Stop all the avenues to your ſenſes, ſay theſe men, and then you will hear and ſee things, of which, groſs and

animal

animal beings, who, like the brute creation, make uſe of their eyes and ears only to hear and ſee, can form no conception.

A MOST excellent preſcription, indeed! The ſcholars of *Hippocrates* will convince you, that a better could not have been imagined to make men run mad. It ſeems therefore very probable, that all theſe ſpirits, with the worlds they inhabit, and all that felicity we hope to ſhare with them after death, have no more real exiſtence than the Nymphs, *Cupids*, and Graces of the Poets; the gardens of the *Heſperides*, or the iſlands of *Circe* and *Calypſo*; in a word, than all thoſe ſportive ſallies of imagination, which ſerve to amuſe us, though we do not believe their reality. The religion of our anceſtors commands us to believe in a *Jupiter* and a *Venus*; but what idea does it give us of them? *Jupiter* ſhould be a God, and *Venus* a Goddeſs: but the *Jupiter* of *Phidias* is only a hero, and the *Venus* of *Praxiteles* only a beautiful woman.

man.—No man in *Greece* ever had the leaſt idea of the God or the Goddeſs. We are promiſed an immortal life with the Gods after death; but the idea we form of it, is either collected from ſenſual pleaſures, or from the moſt refined and ſentimental delights we have experienced in this life.—It is, therefore, very evident, that we have no exact or accurate notion of the life of ſpiritual beings, and of their joys. I will not, however, deny but that there may be, or really are Gods, Spirits, or Beings, endowed with greater perfections than ourſelves. All that my concluſion tends to prove, is this, that we cannot have any true idea of them; or, in a word, that we know nothing of them.—And, if we know nothing either of their ſtate, or of their nature, it is juſt the ſame thing, with regard to us, as if they did not exiſt at all. *Anaxagoras* proved to me, one day, with all the enthuſiaſm of an aſtronomer, that the moon was

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inhabited—Perhaps he might be right.—But what are theſe inhabitants of the moon to us? Do you imagine, that King *Philip* was under the leaſt apprehenſion, that the Greeks would call them to their aſſiſtance againſt him?—For, ſuppoſing that there are inhabitants in the moon; to us, this planet is nothing more than a mere ſhining orb, which enlightens our earth, and divides our time. But if the caſe is ſo, and it cannot well be otherwiſe, how ridiculous is it, to regulate one's life according to ſuch chimæras, and renounce the happineſs we may really enjoy, and live upon uncertain hopes—How abſurd, to loſe all the advantages of our exiſtence, as long as we live, in expectation that we ſhall be indemnified hereafter, when we ſhall ceaſe to be! For, that we now live, and that our life will have an end, is abſolutely certain: but whether another ſcene of exiſtence will commence after this, is at leaſt uncertain; and, if it were nto ſo, yet

yet it would be impoſſible to determine the relation between that and our preſent being, as we have no medium to enable us to acquire any juſt conception of it. Let us, therefore, form the plan of our life upon what we know and experience: and, ſince we have diſcovered in what a happy life conſiſts, let us find out the moſt direct and ſafeſt way to obtain it.

CHAP. IV.

In which Hippias draws better Concluſions.

I Have before obſerved, that the happineſs we ſeek, can only be found in a ſociety, which has already attained to a certain degree of perfection: in ſuch a ſociety, all theſe ſeveral means of happineſs unfold themſelves; which, in the ſavage, whoſe wants are ſo few, and manner of life ſo ſolitary, and whoſe paſſions are ſo confined, muſt ever remain

main inactive talents. The introduction of property, the inequality of riches, and of conditions, the poverty of ſome, the affluence, luxury and indolence of others; theſe are the true Gods of the arts, the *Mercuries* and the Muſes, to whom we are indebted for their invention, or at leaſt, for their improvement and perfection. To the united labours of how many different men is the rich man obliged for his enjoyments? Some cultivate his fields and vineyards, others plant his pleaſure gardens, others prepare and poliſh the marble which is employed for the building of his houſe; thouſands traverſe the ocean to bring him the riches of foreign climates; thouſands are employed in manufacturing the ſilk and purple he is clothed with; and the carpets which adorn his apartments; in making the coſtly veſſels, out of which he eats and drinks; and the ſoft couches on which he enjoys the moſt voluptuous repoſe. Thouſands muſt paſs ſleepleſs nights in

torturing their invention to diſcover for him new conveniences, new delights, and a ſtill more eaſy and pleaſing manner of doing the moſt eaſy and agreeable actions nature has impoſed upon us. By the magic power of art, which can give the appearance of novelty to the moſt common things in nature, they muſt endeavour to remove his diſguſt, and awaken his ſenſations overcome by the ſatiety of enjoyment. For him the painter, the muſician, the poet and the actor labours and ſurmounts innumerable difficulties to bring thoſe arts, which ſerve to multiply his amuſements, to perfection. But, all theſe men would not take ſo much pains to make one man happy, if they were not deſirous of being happy themſelves. Their induſtry is only exerted for him, who is able to reward their attention to his pleaſures. The king of *Perſia* himſelf is not ſufficiently abſolute to compell *Zeuxis* to paint him a *Leda*. The powerful inchantment of gold alone, to which the

the general conſent of all civilized people has given an equal value with every thing that is uſeful and agreeable in nature, can oblige genius and induſtry to work for a *Midas*, who without the ample poſſeſſions he enjoys, would hardly be qualified to grind the colours for the painter whom he employs. The art, therefore, my dear *Callias*, of procuring to ourſelves the means of happineſs is already found out, as ſoon as we have diſcovered the art of providing ourſelves with a ſufficient quantity of the philoſopher's ſtone, which can make all nature obedient to us: a ſecret, which can make millions of our equals the voluntary ſlaves to our voluptuouſneſs; which can make every ingenious man a ready miniſter to our wiſhes, and by the irreſiſtible ſplendor of a golden ſhower ſupply us with a *Danae* in every beautiful female. The art of becoming rich, *Callias*, is nothing more in reality, than the art of ſecuring to ourſelves the property

of others with their own conſent. A tyrant, by the force of a prejudice pretty ſimilar to that, which makes the Egyptians deify the crocodile, has an extraordinary advantage in this particular. His prerogative may extend itſelf as far as his power, and his power being reſtrained by no laws, as no one can compell him to the performance of any, he may, therefore, appropriate to himſelf the property of his ſubjects, without giving himſelf any concern, whether they conſent or not. It gives him little trouble to procure immenſe riches: and if he wants to ſquander away millions in one day with the moſt unbounded profuſion, he need only make that part of his people, whom his neceſſities condemn to inceſſant labour, faſt that day. But beſides, that this advantage can fall to the ſhare of very few mortals, it is of ſuch a nature, that a wiſe man cannot envy it. Pleaſure ceaſes to be ſo, when it is carried beyond a certain degree. An exceſs

of

of ſenſual delights deſtroys the organs of ſenſation; and an exceſs of the pleaſures of the imagination, corrupts the taſte for real beauty; immoderate deſires can find no charms in the order and regularity of nature. For this reaſon, it is frequently the fate of Eaſtern Princes, who are immured within the walls of their ſeraglio, to periſh in the midſt of ſenſual pleaſures, thro' ſatiety and exceſſive indulgence. In vain for them the ſweeteſt perfumes of *Arabia* diffuſe their fragrant odours, in vain, the moſt generous wines ſparkle in chryſtal vaſes, and a thouſand beauties, each of which would have deſerved an altar at *Paphos*, exert all their charms, and exhauſt every female art to provoke his languid ſenſations: in vain, ten thouſand ſlaves contend with emulation, to find out new and infinite pleaſures, which for ſome moments, at leaſt, might be able to divert the heated fancy of this wretched fortunate being. We have, therefore, more obligations to na-

ture than we generally imagine, for placing us in ſuch a ſituation as obliges us to purchaſe pleaſure by labour and induſtry, and teaches us to moderate our paſſions, before we attain that happineſs, which we can never truly enjoy without moderation.

As then tyrants and public robbers are the only people, who though at their own peril, ſeize upon the property of others by force; ſo the man who is deſirous to free himſelf from a ſtate of neceſſity and dependance, has nothing elſe to do, but to acquire the art of promoting the advantage, and increaſing the pleaſures of the favourites of fortune. Among the various arts, by which this can be effected, there are ſome, peculiar to men of genius, excluſive of others, which according to the different ends they have in view, may be divided into two claſſes; the firſt of which, has for its object the conveniencies; the other, the pleaſures of men of the higheſt rank and affluence in a nation. The firſt, which includes

includes the civil and military arts, appears generally among free ſtates only; the other, is limited only by the degree of riches and luxury of the people, whatever their political conſtitution may be. In *Athens*, when in its poor and humble ſtate, a good general was infinitely more eſteemed than a painter; but in the rich and voluptuous *Athens*, no one gives himſelf the trouble to inquire, who is the beſt qualified for a general; things of greater importance engage their attention: they debate ſeriouſly which of the female dancers has the prettieſt foot, or dances in the moſt graceful manner? Whether the *Venus* of *Praxiteles*, or that of *Alcamenes*, is the moſt beautiful? The arts of genius, which belong to the firſt claſs, ſeldom of themſelves, procure riches and affluence. The extraordinary talents, merit and virtue they require, are commonly found only in poor republics, ſtriving for ſuperiority and power, which reward the ſervices of their citi-

zens, only with crowns of laurel. But, in ſtates where riches and luxury have got the aſcendant, all thoſe talents and virtues which the art of government ſeems to require, are conſidered as uſeleſs. There, one may make laws without being a *Solon*, one may lead armies without being either a *Leonidas*, or a *Themiſtocles*. *Pericles* and *Alcibiades* governed the Athenian ſtate, and commanded their armies, though the one, was only an orator, and the other maſter of no other art, but that of engaging the heart and affections of the people. In ſuch republics, the people are in poſſeſſion of thoſe powers, which in deſpotic governments, belong to the only perſon who is not a ſlave; if we can but gain his favour, we are thought capable of every thing. *Pericles* without the external marks of regal dignity, ruled as abſolutely over the free ſtate of *Athens*, as *Artaxerxes* over the enſlaved countries of *Aſia*. His abilities, and the arts he had learnt from

from the beautiful *Aſpaſia*, had gained him a ſuperiority, which was the more unlimitted, as it was voluntarily obtained. The art of raiſing a high opinion of himſelf in others, the art of perſuaſion, and the art of taking advantage of the vanity of the Athenians, and of ſubduing their paſſions; theſe, were the ſole arts by which he governed. He involved the commonwealth in unjuſt and unſucceſsful wars; he exhauſted the public treaſury; irritated the allies by oppreſſive extortions; and that the people might not have leiſure to look narrowly into this fine ſyſtem of adminiſtration, he built them public theatres, gave them beautiful ſtatues and pictures to behold, and entertained them with dancers and muſicians. At length they were ſo much accuſtomed to theſe various amuſements, that the repreſentation of a new piece, and a contention between two muſicians became matters of ſtate, which made them forget, what were really ſuch. A hundred

years before, *Pericles* would have been conſidered as the curſe of the republic; but at that time *Pericles* would have been an *Ariſtides*. In the times he lived, *Pericles*, as he then appeared, was the greateſt man in the ſtate; the man, who had raiſed the city of *Athens* to the higheſt pitch of power and glory it was capable of attaining; the man, whoſe times will hereafter be ever celebrated as the golden age of the muſes: but there was ſtill a circumſtance, infinitely more intereſting to himſelf; he was the man for whom nature ſeems to have collected at one period an *Euripides*, an *Ariſtophanes*, a *Phidias*, a *Zeuxis*, a *Damon* and an *Aſpaſia*, to render his private life as agreeable, as his public one was illuſtrious. The art of governing the imaginations of men, of influencing at pleaſure the ſecret ſelf-hidden ſprings of their actions, and of making them ſubſervient to our deſigns, whilſt we induce them to believe the contrary, is doubtleſs the moſt

uſeful

uſeful of all arts to thoſe who poſſeſs it; the art which the Sophiſts both teach and put in practice. To this, they are indebted for the reputation, independence and happineſs they enjoy. Thou canſt eaſily conceive, *Callias*, that it cannot be either taught or acquired in a few hours: my intention at preſent is only to give thee a general idea of it. That which is called the wiſdom of the Sophiſts is the ſkill of making ſuch uſe of mankind, as that they may be inclined to promote our pleaſures, or in general to become inſtrumental to our views. An eloquence, which only deſerves to be called ſo, when it enables us to make our hearers whoſoever they are, believe what we pleaſe, when it raiſes any of the paſſions juſt to ſuch a pitch, as will effectually anſwer our purpoſes; ſuch an eloquence as this, is abſolutely neceſſary, and is, indeed, the chief method the Sophiſts employ to gain their end. The grammarians take a great deal of pains to

teach young people to ſpeak, the Sophiſts do more, they teach them to perſuade. In this alone, conſiſts the ſuperiority of an art, which, perhaps, no man has ever poſſeſſed in ſo eminent a degree as *Alcibiades*, who has been ſo much celebrated as the hero of our times. The wiſe man exerts this talent of perſuaſion, only in matters of the higheſt importance; *Alcibiades* leaves to an *Antipho* the trouble of poliſhing diſcourſes compoſed according to the moſt exact rules of art; while he, perſuades his countrymen, that ſo amiable a man as himſelf, has a right to do any thing he pleaſes. He perſuades the Spartans to forget he had ever been their enemy, and removes the ſuſpicion of his taking the firſt opportunity of doing them a freſh injury. He perſuades their Queen *Timea* to take him to her bed, and makes the Satraps of the Perſian King believe, that he will betray the Athenians to them, at the very ſame time that he is perſuading the Athenians of their injuſtice, in

ſuſpecting

ſuſpecting him to be a traitor. This power of perſuaſion implies the faculty of aſſuming any form, that may be agreeable to the perſon on whom we have any views; it implies a facility of making ourſelves maſters of the moſt ſecret avenues of his heart; it implies the ſkill of exciting or ſoothing his paſſions, of confirming or invalidating one paſſion by another, or totally ſuppreſſing them, as occaſion may require. Beſides this, it implies a certain complaiſance, which the moraliſts call flattery, though it only deſerves this appellation, when it is imitated by thoſe paraſites, who buzz about the tables of the rich. An affability, which ariſes from a deep knowledge of the human heart, and is directly oppoſite to that abſurd reſerve of certain fanciful beings, who are diſpleaſed with mankind, becauſe they are different from what they, who aſſume the authority of legiſlators, think they ought to be. To complete the idea of the complaiſance here

here meant, it is of ſuch a nature, that without it though we may, poſſibly, gain the eſteem, yet we can never engage the love of mankind: for our love can only be beſtowed on ſuch perſons as reſemble us, whoſe taſte is really, or ſeems to be ſimilar to our own; and who are ſo deſirous of promoting our pleaſures, that in this particular, they take example from *Aſpaſia* of *Miletum*, who continued always the favourite of *Pericles*; for when ſhe came to that time of life, when the ſouls of women become the objects of affection, ſhe confined herſelf within the boundaries of platonic love; wiſely reſigning the gratification of his ſenſual appetites to other women. By thy looks, *Callias*, I perceive what thou wouldſt object to thoſe arts which are ſo contrary to the principles thou haſt been uſed to maintain. It is true, the art of living which the Sophiſts teach, is grounded upon ideas of what, in a moral ſenſe, is beautiful

beautiful and good, very different from their's who talk ſo eloquently of ideal beauty, and of a certain virtue, which is its own reward. But if thou art not more tired of hearing me, than I am of talking, I think it will be no difficult matter to convince thee, that this ideal beauty as well as virtue, may be ranked in the ſame claſs, with thoſe fabulous ſtories of ſpirits, we juſt now mentioned.

CHAP. V.

The antiplatonic ſyſtem in abſtract.

WHAT is the beautiful? What is the good? Before we anſwer theſe queſtions, it will be neceſſary, I think, to inquire, what men underſtand by the ideas of goodneſs and of beauty. We will begin our diſquiſitions with the beautiful.

beautiful. What an infinite variety in the opinions of different nations with regard to beauty? The whole world, however, agrees in this point, that a beautiful woman is the moſt complete of all the productions of nature. But, how muſt ſhe be formed, in order to be conſidered as a perfect beauty of her kind? This is the ſource of perpetual diſpute. Repreſent to thyſelf a collection of as many different lovers, as there are various nations in the ſeveral climates of the globe, nothing is more certain, than that each of them will aſſert his miſtreſs to have the preference over all the reſt. The European will prefer a fair complexion; the Moor, one of the deepeſt jet; the Grecian, will be fond of a ſmall mouth, a breaſt which the hollow of the hand may cover; and the delicate proportion of a fine ſhape; the African will be pleaſed with a flat noſe, and red thick lips; the Perſian will admire in his favourite, large eyes and a free

and

and eaſy ſhape; whilſt the Chineſe will be captivated with a ſmall eye, and delicate round feet. Is it not the ſame, with reſpect to what is called beauty or propriety in a moral ſenſe? The Spartan virgins are not aſhamed of appearing in a dreſs, which the moſt abandoned proſtitute in *Athens* would think diſhonourable. A Perſian lady, who ſhould diſcover her face in public, would be conſidered in the ſame light, as a woman of *Smyrna*, who ſhould appear naked. The faſhion of the Eaſtern people, requires a number of bows and attitudes of ſubmiſſion, which they always beſtow upon thoſe they mean to honour: But, theſe marks of civility would be looked upon by the Greeks, as ſcandalous and ſlaviſh; as the Attic politeneſs would ſeem groſs and ruſtic at *Perſepolis*. In *Greece*, a free born virgin would be diſhonoured, if any other perſon, but her huſband, had unlooſed her virgin girdle: but with certain people who inhabit beyond the Ganges,

Ganges, a young lady is eſteemed, in proportion to the number of lovers ſhe has had, who can boaſt of her charms from experience. This difference in the ideas of moral beauty, diſcovers itſelf not only in the particular cuſtoms and manners of different people, of which there are numberleſs examples, but alſo in the very idea, which men generally have of virtue. Among the Romans, virtue and valour are the ſame thing. Among the Athenians, this word comprehends every uſeful and agreeable accompliſhment. In *Sparta*, virtue conſiſts only in obedience to the law. In deſpotic governments, it is the moſt ſlaviſh and abject ſubmiſſion to the tyrant and his ſatraps. Among the inhabitants of the Caſpian Sea, he is conſidered as the moſt virtuous man, who is the moſt expert plunderer, and has killed the greateſt number of the enemy: and in ſome of the warmeſt climates of *India*, he only has attained to the higheſt pitch of virtue, who is totally inactive,

a ſtate

a ſtate, which, in the opinion of theſe people, makes him moſt reſemble the Gods. What muſt we conclude from all theſe inſtances? Is there then nothing excellent or juſt in itſelf? Is there not ſome certain model, by which we may judge of what is beautiful or moral? Let us examine this point. If there is really ſuch a model, it muſt exiſt in nature. For it would be abſurd to imagine, that a Pygmalion could form an image, more beautiful than the celebrated *Phryne*, who to make all *Greece* judge of her beauty, had the confidence to appear at the Olympic Games, in the ſame manner as the three Goddeſſes who diſputed the prize of beauty, appeared before *Paris*. The *Venus* of any nation, is nothing more than the image of a woman, who at a general aſſembly of the people, ſhould be declared to unite in her perſon, the characters of their national beauty in the higheſt degree. But among ſuch a variety of models, which of them is to be

be conſidered as the moſt perfect in itſelf? The Greek, will prefer his roſy cheeked Venus; the Moor, his black and ſwarthy one; the Perſian will contend for one of a genteel and delicate ſhape; and the Chineſe, for his little round *Venus*, with a double chin. Let us attempt to decide this queſtion. Suppoſe a general aſſembly was convened, to which every nation was to ſend the handſomeſt man, and the moſt beautiful woman, according to the ideas of beauty, peculiar to each people; and among the ſeveral candidates for the prize of beauty, let the women decide which is the handſomeſt man; and the men, which is the moſt beautiful of the women. In ſuch an aſſembly, one might eaſily diſtinguiſh thoſe who are born in our milder and more temperate climate, where the works of nature are impreſſed with finer marks of delicate ſymmetry and proportion, and with a more agreeable mixture of colours. For the ſuperior beauty of nature, in all tempe-

temperate regions, diſplays itſelf even in the vegetable as well as animal ſyſtem. But, among theſe ſelect models of both ſexes, their choice would, perhaps, remain a long time in ſuſpence: but, at leaſt, probably, that man would be thought the handſomeſt, who belonged to a country, in which the ſeveral Gymnaſtic exerciſes were in the greateſt repute, and comparatively carried to the higheſt perfection: and the men, with one voice, would proclaim that woman, as the moſt perfect of all the beauties, who had been ſent from a country, where the moſt important concern in the education of the daughters, was to unfold their natural beauties with all poſſible care. The Spartan would, therefore, probably be declared the handſomeſt man; and the Perſian, the moſt beautiful woman. The Greek, who prefers grace and elegance to beauty, becauſe the Grecian women are rather pretty than beautiful, would allot the prize to the Perſian woman, though

his

his particular inclination would lead him at the ſame time, to prefer a virgin of *Paphos*, or of *Miletum*; the Chineſe would, probably, form the ſame judgment, though the plumpneſs and double chin of his own country women, would ſtill be more pleaſing to him.—Let us now conſider moral beauty. However various the opinions prevailing in different climates with regard to this point may alſo be, yet it will not be denied, that the manners of that people, who are of the moſt witty, lively, ſocial and pleaſing diſpoſition, muſt obtain the general ſuffrage of preference. The unaffected and eaſy politeneſs of the Athenians, muſt be more pleaſing to a ſtranger, than the ſtudied, ſerious and ceremonial civilities of the people of the Eaſt. The obliging manner, and appearance of affability which accompanies the ſmalleſt actions of the Greek, muſt be as much ſuperior to the ſtiff gravity of the Perſian, or the rough honeſty and ſimplicity of the

the Scythian, as the dreſs of a lady at *Smyrna*, which neither totally conceals nor yet quite diſcovers her charms, is preferable to that of a veiled Eaſtern beauty, or to the indelicate nakedneſs of a ſavage. The example, then, of the moſt enlightened and ſocial people, ſeems to be the true rule by which we are to judge of moral beauty or propriety; and *Athens* and *Smyrna* are, therefore, the propereſt ſchools to form our taſte and manners.

But ſince we have diſcovered a rule to enable us to judge of what is beautiful, where ſhall we find one, which we may apply to determine what is proper? For the ideas which prevail among men, upon this ſubject, are ſo various and contradictory, that with ſome people, the ſame identical action is rewarded with laurel-crowns and ſtatues; which, with others, is made capital, and puniſhed by the moſt ignominious death; and there is ſcarcely a vice which has not an altar and prieſt conſecrated to its ſervice. It

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is true, the laws of every nation, are to them the ſtandards of right and wrong; but what is commanded by the law, in one nation, is forbidden by it in another. The queſtion, therefore, is, whether there is not a general rule for determining what is right in itſelf? To this I anſwer in the affirmative; and that this general law, is nothing elſe but the voice of Nature, ſaying to every man, Seek thine own advantage; or, in other words, Satisfy thy natural deſires, and enjoy as much pleaſure as thou canſt. This is the only law nature has given to man; and as long as he is in a ſtate of nature, the right he has to every thing which is an object of his deſires, or to what is good, is only limited by the degree of power he poſſeſſes; he dares do every thing he can, and is accountable to no man for his conduct. But, the ſtate of ſociety, which has connected a number of men together for their common advantage, has ſet to this one law of nature,

ture, which enjoins us to ſeek our own advantage, the following reſtriction, without doing injury to others. As therefore, in a ſtate of nature, man has a right to every thing that is uſeful to him; ſo, in a ſocial ſtate the law declares every thing unjuſt and puniſhable, which is injurious to ſociety; and on the contrary, joins the idea of ſuperiority or meritorious ſervice to all thoſe actions which contribute to its advantage and pleaſure. The ideas too of virtue and vice are founded, partly upon a compact made by the members of every ſociety among themſelves; and ſo far they are arbitrary: partly, upon what is advantageous or prejudicial to any particular people; and this is the reaſon why there are ſuch manifeſt contradictions in the laws of different nations. The climate, the ſituation, the form of government, the religion, the particular diſpoſition and the peculiar character of every nation, as well as its manners, its ſtrength or weakneſs,

its poverty or riches, determine its ideas of good and bad. Hence ariſes the infinite variety obſervable among the moſt poliſhed and civilized people in their ideas of juſtice and injuſtice; hence, the contraſt between the morals of the inhabitants of the Torrid Zone, and thoſe of colder climates; the morals of a free ſtate, and thoſe of a deſpotic kingdom; the morals of a poor republic, which can only raiſe itſelf by a warlike ſpirit, and thoſe of a rich and flouriſhing empire, which maintains itſelf by a ſpirit of commerce and by the arts of peace. Hence laſtly ariſes the abſurdity of moraliſts who torture their imaginations, to determine what ought to be the ſtandard of right for all nations, before they have diſcovered how it is poſſible, that the ſame thing ſhould be equally advantageous to all nations.

The Sophiſts, whoſe ſyſtem of morality is not founded upon abſtract ideas, but upon the real nature and qualities of things,

things, take men juſt as they find them in different places. They hold a ſtateſman at *Athens*, in no higher perſonal eſtimation, than a juggler at *Perſepolis*; and a venerable Spartan matron is in their eyes, no more to be admired than a *Lais* at *Corinth*. It is true, that the juggler at *Athens*, and the *Lais* at *Sparta* would be hurtful to ſociety; but an *Ariſtides* at *Perſepolis*, and a Spartan matron at *Corinth*, if they were not equally prejudicial, would, at leaſt, be entirely uſeleſs.

The Idealiſts, for ſo I uſually call thoſe philoſophers, who would new mould the world according to their ideas, form their diſciples ſo, that they can never be conſidered as citizens of any particular ſtate, becauſe their morality preſuppoſes a ſyſtem of legiſlation, which has never exiſted. They continue poor and deſpiſed, becauſe no nation confers honours or rewards on any perſons, but thoſe who promote its advantage, or at leaſt, appear to

do ſo. They, on the contrary, are looked upon as the corrupters of youth, and the ſecret enemies of ſociety; and baniſhment or a cup of poiſon is at laſt, the only reward they receive for the thankleſs pains they have taken to ſpiritualize mankind, in order to raiſe them to the claſs of ideal exiſtences, and put them upon a footing with mathematical points, lines and triangles. More prudent than theſe imaginary Sages, who like the muſician of Aſpondus play only for themſelves; the Sophiſts leave the citizens to be informed of what is juſt or unjuſt, by the laws of their reſpective countries. As they themſelves belong to no particular ſtate, they enjoy all the privileges of a citizen of the world; and as they expreſs an external regard for the laws and religion of every nation where they live, they by this means ſecure themſelves from being moleſted by the guardians and diſpenſers of thoſe laws. Indeed, they acknowledge and obey no law, than that general

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one of nature, which preſcribes no other rule of right to mankind, than that of their own advantage. Their natural liberty is only confined by attending to a neceſſary prudence, which teaches them to give ſuch a colouring, ſuch a turn, and ſuch graces to their actions, as will render them moſt agreeable to the perſons with whom they are connected. Moral beauty is nearly the ſame kind of ornament to our actions, as dreſs is to our bodies; and it is equally neceſſary to model our conduct in conformity to the prejudices and taſte of thoſe we live with, as it is to dreſs as they do. A man, whoſe behaviour is formed after one certain pattern, ſhould like the moving ſtatues of *Dædalus*, be fixed to his native ſoil, ſince he is no where in his proper place, but among thoſe who are like him. A Spartan would be as ill qualified to act the part of the firſt ſlave of *Artaxerxes*, as a Sarmatian would to be a *Polemarch* at *Athens*. The wiſe man on the contra-

ry, adapts himſelf to every appearance, every circumſtance, every diſpoſition and ſituation in life: and this he is able to do, becauſe he has no peculiar partialities or paſſions, becauſe he is nothing but a man. He is every where agreeable, for in whatever place he is, he conforms himſelf to the prejudices and follies he meets with. How is it poſſible he ſhould fail of being beloved, who is always inclined to exert himſelf for the advantage of others, to fall in with their opinions and to flatter their paſſions? He knows that men are but too ſenſible of their errors, that they love nothing ſo well as their faults, and that there is not a more certain way of procuring their hatred, than to tell them a truth they are unwilling to hear. Far therefore from endeavouring to undeceive mankind againſt their inclinations, or from holding up to their view, a mirror which would reproach them with their deformity; he rather confirms the fooliſh in the notion,

notion, that nothing is ſo inſipid as good ſenſe; he makes the prodigal man believe he is generous; and the miſer, that he is only an œconomiſt: he indulges the deformed man in the ſoothing idea that his underſtanding is the more refined from the deficiencies of his perſon; and the rich man, in the perſuaſion that he is a ſtateſman, a ſcholar, a hero, a patron of the muſes, and a favourite of the ladies. He is inchanted with the ſyſtem of the philoſopher, admires the conceited ignorance of the courtier, and the marvellous exploits of the general; he agrees with the dancing maſter, that *Cimon* would indiſputably have been the greateſt man *Greece* ever produced, if he had known how to dance; and he concurs with the painter in the idea, that it requires more genius to be a *Zeuxis*, than a *Homer*. This method of converſing with mankind, is attended with infinitely greater advantages, than one would at firſt imagine. It gains their affection

and their confidence, and raiſes the ideas of our merit, in proportion to the opinion they have of their own. This is the moſt certain method of attaining the higheſt pitch of fortune. For doſt thou really imagine, that great talents and ſuperior merit alone, can qualify a man to become an Archon, a General, a Satrap, or the favourite of a Prince? Caſt thine eyes about the republic, and thou wilt find, that one man owes his authority to a ſmiling countenance with which he accoſts the citizens; another, to the conſequential rotundity of his belly; a third, to the beauty of his wife, and a fourth to the ſtrength of his voice. Now turn thyſelf to the court, and there thou wilt find people who owe the ſplendor of their fortune to the recommendation of ſome chambermaid; to the favour of ſome lady who has been anſwerable for their talents, or, perhaps to a certain gift of falling aſleep while the Viſier was amuſing himſelf with their wives. Nothing

thing is more common in this land of inchantment, than to ſee a beardleſs youth transformed into a general, a player into a miniſter of ſtate, and a pimp into a high prieſt. Here, a man entirely deſtitute of merit, by means of one qualification alone, and that too the qualification of an aſs, ſhall acquire a fortune, which another with the greateſt abilities, would have purſued in vain. Who then can entertain the leaſt doubt that the Sophiſt's art is capable of procuring one way or other the favours of fortune to thoſe who poſſeſs it; ſuppoſing only, they are maſters of thoſe natural accompliſhments, without which, the man of underſtanding muſt, in this world, always give way to the fool who is bleſt with them? But, even in the path of merit, no man is better qualified to advance himſelf than the Sophiſt. What office is there which he will not fill with reputation? Who is fitter to govern men, than he who knows beſt how to converſe with them?

Who is better qualified to ſucceed in public negotiations? Who is more able to be the counſellor of a prince? And ſo far as fortune favours him, who will command an army with greater glory and applauſe? Who will better underſtand the art of getting himſelf rewarded for the ſkill and merits of his inferior officers? Who will know better than he, how to ſet a value upon that foreſight he never had; upon thoſe prudent meaſures, he never took; and upon thoſe wounds he never received?

But, it is now time to finiſh a diſcourſe which begins to be tedious to us both. I have ſaid enough to diſſolve the charm, with which enthuſiaſm has fettered thy mind; and if this is not ſufficient, any thing elſe I could add, would be ſuperfluous. Think not however, *Callias*, that the ſect of Sophiſts holds an undiſtinguiſhed rank in human ſociety. The number of thoſe who practice this art, is in all ſituations very conſiderable; and thou

thou wilt ſcarcely find one ſingle perſon among all thoſe who have acquired a large fortune, who is not indebted for it, to a ſkilful application of our principles. Theſe principles conſtitute the turn of thought which is common to courtiers, to perſons who have devoted themſelves to the ſervice of the great, and principally to that claſs of men, who in every ſtate are conſidered as the nobleſt and moſt diſtinguiſhed. Except indeed in ſome few inſtances only, where ſportive fortune accidentally throws a fool into a wiſe man's place, we may obſerve that the acuteſt men, who have known how to make the beſt uſe of theſe maxims, have always been ſuch, as have advanced fartheſt in the paths of honour and proſperity.

CHAP. VI.

Indocility of Agathon.

HIPPIAS, after having taken ſo much pains to make his diſciple a wiſe man, thought himſelf, at leaſt, intitled to his gratitude for it. But, we muſt confeſs, he had to do with a man incapable of comprehending the importance of this favour; or perceiving the beauty of a ſyſtem ſo contrary to his own feelings. He was, therefore, not a little diſappointed in his expectation, when *Agathon*, finding he had finiſhed his diſcourſe, returned him this ſhort anſwer.

AGATHON.

Thou haſt entertained me, *Hippias*, with a very elegant harangue.—Thy obſervations are very refined; thy concluſions very accurate, and thy maxims eaſily reduced to practice: and I doubt not, that the way thou haſt pointed out to me, certainly leads to that happineſs, the

the ſuperiority of which, above my method of being happy, thou haſt ſet in the ſtrongeſt light. Notwithſtanding this, I feel not the leaſt inclination to purſue thy ſyſtem of happineſs; and if I am not miſtaken, I ſhould have as much difficulty to turn Sophiſt, as thou wouldſt to diſmiſs thy female dancers; to conſecrate thine houſe as a public temple to *Diana*, and retire into *India*, to become a Bramin.

Hippias laughed at this anſwer, though he was not very well pleaſed with it. What haſt thou, ſaid he, to object to my ſyſtem?

AGATHON.

It does not convince me.

HIPPIAS.

Why not?

AGATHON.

Becauſe thy concluſions are contradicted by my experience and feelings.

HIPPIAS.

I ſhould be glad to be informed what

what thy experience and feelings are, which are ſo contrary to thoſe of all the world ?

AGATHON.

Thou wouldſt, perhaps, prove them to be mere chimeras.

HIPPIAS.

And ſuppoſe I ſhould prove this ?

AGATHON.

Thou wouldſt only prove it to thyſelf, *Hippias* ; or rather thou wouldſt only prove, that thou art not *Callias*.

HIPPIAS.

But the queſtion is, whether *Hippias* or *Callias* is in the right ?

AGATHON.

Who ſhall be judge ?

HIPPIAS.

Mankind in general.

AGATHON.

But what would that prove againſt me ?

HIPPIAS.

Much. For when ten millions of men determine,

determine, that two or three out of their number are fools, they are indiſputably ſo.

AGATHON.

But, ſuppoſe theſe ten millions, whoſe judgment is ſo deciſive, ſhould be ſo many fools, and only the three ſhould be wiſe men?

HIPPIAS.

How is it poſſible this ſhould happen?

AGATHON.

Is it not poſſible that ten millions ſhould be infected with the plague, and yet *Socrates* alone be free from it?

HIPPIAS.

This inſtance can be of no ſervice to thee. For a nation is not always infected with the plague; but the ten millions I am ſpeaking of, always think as I do. They are, therefore, in their natural ſtate, when they think ſo; and whoever thinks otherwiſe, belongs conſequently to a different order of beings, or to thoſe beings who are generally called fools.

AGA-

AGATHON.

Then I reſign myſelf to my fate.

HIPPIAS.

There is another alternative, young man. Thou art either aſhamed to give up thy opinion ſo eaſily, or elſe thou art a hypocrite.

AGATHON.

Neither the one, nor the other, *Hippias.*

HIPPIAS.

Deny, for inſtance, if thou canſt, that the beautiful *Cyane*, who waited on us at breakfaſt, had inſpired thee with deſires, and that thou didſt ſteal ſome ſecret glances at her.

AGATHON.

I deny nothing.

HIPPIAS.

Confeſs then, that the ſight of her well-turned ſnowy arms, and her boſom heaving through the lightly agitated ſilk which covered it, had excited in thee the deſire of poſſeſſing her.

AGA-

AGATHON.

Is not then the mere ſight of ſuch an object an enjoyment?

HIPPIAS.

No ſubterfuges, young man.

AGATHON.

Thou doſt deceive thyſelf, *Hippias*, if it is permitted to ſay ſo to a Sage; I want no ſubterfuges. I diſtinguiſh between a mechanical inſtinct only, which is in ſome meaſure involuntary, and the voluntary purpoſes of my ſoul. I have not had the deſire which thou doſt lay to my charge.

HIPPIAS.

I accuſe thee only of trifling with me: I believe I ought to be well acquainted with nature. Enthuſiaſm, at thy time of life, is not ſo incurable a diſorder, as to be able to hold out againſt the allurements of pleaſure.

AGATHON.

For that reaſon I carefully avoid every opportunity which might ſeduce me.

HIP-

HIPPIAS.

Thou alloweſt then, that *Cyane* has charms?

AGATHON.

Many.

HIPPIAS.

And that the poſſeſſion of them would be a pleaſure?

AGATHON.

Probably.

HIPPIAS.

Why then doſt thou torment thyſelf, by abſtaining from a pleaſure which it is in thy power to obtain?

AGATHON.

Becauſe I then ſhould deprive myſelf of many other pleaſures which I prefer.

HIPPIAS.

Can a man, at thy age, be ſo great a novice!—What pleaſures has nature reſerved for thee, which are unknown pleaſures to the reſt of mankind? Knoweſt thou any greater than theſe?—I underſtand

ſtand thee, thou doſt probably again allude to the pleaſures of ſpiritual beings, the nectar and ambroſia of the Gods: but we are not now, my friend, playing a farce. The appearance of a *Cyane*, in one of the groves of my garden, would be ſufficient even to materialize thy ſpiritual beings.

AGATHON.

I ſpeak my real ſentiments, *Hippias*. I know ſome pleaſures, which, in my opinion, are much ſuperior to thoſe we enjoy in common with other animals?

HIPPIAS.

Produce ſome inſtance.

AGATHON.

The pleaſure of doing a good action.

HIPPIAS.

What doſt thou mean by a good action?

AGATHON.

An action, by which I contribute to the good of others, by the exertion of my natural abilities, or the ſacrifice of ſome advantage or pleaſure.

HIP-

HIPPIAS.

Art thou then ſimple enough to think that thou ſhouldeſt be more ſollicitous for the good of others than for thy own?

AGATHON.

No, certainly: but I hold it right to ſacrifice a leſs pleaſure to a greater, if it promotes the good of my fellow creatures?

HIPPIAS.

Thou art very kind: but admitting the truth of what thou haſt advanced, how is it connected with the preſent ſubject of our diſcourſe?

AGATHON.

That is eaſily ſeen. Suppoſe only, I had yielded to the impreſſions, the charms of the beautiful *Cyane* may have made upon me: ſuppoſe ſhe loved me, and indulged me in the moſt raviſhing tranſports of voluptuouſneſs; a connection of this nature could not be of long continuance; and would not the remembrance of paſt delights, awaken in me a deſire to repeat them?

HIP-

HIPPIAS.

Another *Cyane* might ſerve thy purpoſe.

AGATHON.

But ſtill ſhe might again become indifferent to me, and I ſhould have the ſame deſires as before.

HIPPIAS.

An endleſs variety, in this particular is, therefore, as thou mayeſt perceive, the law of nature.

AGATHON.

But, in this manner, things might be carried to ſuch a pitch, that I ſhould be unable to get the better of any paſſion.

HIPPIAS.

What neceſſity would there be to reſiſt it, as long as thy deſires were confined within the bounds of nature and moderation ?

AGATHON.

But now, ſuppoſe laſtly, that the wife of my friend, or even the perſon whom the honoured name of a mother ſhould ſecure

ſecure from the baſe thought of ſo unchaſte an attempt, or a young unexperienced daughter, whoſe beauty and innocence were her only dower, ſhould be the object of theſe deſires, which by conſtant indulgence were become ſo impetuous, that I could not poſſibly reſiſt them?

HIPPIAS.

In ſuch caſes, in *Greece* at leaſt, thou muſt guard againſt the penalty of the laws. But, how little ingenuity muſt thou have, if under ſuch circumſtances thou couldſt not diſcover ſome method to gratify thy paſſion without danger of the laws! I ſee thou doſt not know the ladies of *Athens* and *Sparta*.

AGATHON.

Oh! as to that point I am well enough acquainted, even with the prieſteſſes of *Delphos*. But, is it poſſible that thou couldſt be ſerious in what thou haſt now advanced?

HIP-

HIPPIAS.

I have ſpoken agreeably to my principles. The laws, in particular ſtates (for in ſome a greater latitude is allowed) have found it neceſſary, to limit within certain bounds, the natural right we have to every woman who excites our deſires. But as this was done only to prevent ſome inconveniencies, which might be apprehended in ſuch ſtates, from a licentious uſe of this right, ſo thou mayeſt perceive, that the intent and ſpirit of the law is ſtill preſerved, if one has prudence enough to avoid being detected.

AGATHON.

Oh *Hippias!* I have now brought thee to the point I aimed at. Thou ſeeſt the conſequences of thy principles. If whatever is the object of my deſires is right in itſelf—If the extravagant cravings of appetite, under the ſpecious pretence of advantage, an appellation to which they are not, however, entitled, are the only rules of our actions—If the laws can be artfully

artfully evaded, and every thing is allowable, where no eye is witneſs—If virtue, and the expectations of virtue are merely chimerical, what will prevent even children from conſpiring againſt their parents? What will prevent the mother from proſtituting both herſelf and her daughter to the higheſt bidder? What prevents me, if it ſhould be conſiſtent with my intereſt, from plunging the dagger into the breaſt of my friend? From plundering the temples of the Gods? From betraying my native country? From putting myſelf at the head of a band of robbers? Or, if I am ſufficiently powerful, from deſtroying whole countries, and laying whole nations in blood? Doſt thou not perceive, that thy principles, which thou haſt the aſſurance to dignify with the name of wiſdom, and endeavoureſt to make them appear ſpecious, by an artificial mixture of truth and falſhood, if once generally admitted, would transform men into more ſavage beaſts,

beaſts, than hyænas, tygers or crocodiles? Thou laugheſt at virtue and religion, know then, that her image is engraven in the moſt indelible characters upon our ſouls, and by a ſecret, and as is were magic charm, which ſecures obedience to the laws more effectually, than the rewards and puniſhments annexed to them, invites us to truth, regularity and goodneſs. To theſe impreſſions, I ſay, it is to be attributed, that there are ſtill men to be found in the world, who retain ſome ſhadow of morality and virtue. Thou treateſt the ideas of virtue and of moral perfection, as the workings of the fancy. Conſider me, *Hippias*, obſcure as I now am; I defy the ſeductions of all thy *Cyanes*, the ſpecious perſuaſions of thy philoſophy, and all the advantages which thy principles and thy example promiſe me. One of thoſe impreſſions of the fancy, as thou doſt call them, is ſufficient to deſtroy the ideal inchantment

of all thy deluſions. Admit, that virtue is an enthuſiaſm, yet it is ſuch an enthuſiaſm as renders me happy: An enthuſiaſm, which would make all men happy, and change the whole earth into a paradiſe, if thy principles, and thoſe who practiſe them, did not ſpread miſery and corruption, as far as the infectious poiſon of their influence extends.

Agathon's eyes ſparkled with fire, while he ſpoke this, and a painter deſirous of repreſenting an *Apollo* glowing with anger, would, at this inſtant, have taken his countenance for his model. But, the wiſe *Hippias* replied to this indignant zeal only by a ſmile, which would have done honour to *Momus* himſelf; and then without altering the tone of his voice, now *Callias*, ſaid he, I think I know thee, and thou wilt have nothing more to fear from my temptations. Sound reaſoning ſuits not ſuch heated imaginations as thine. How eaſily, if thou

hadſt

hadſt been capable of underſtanding me, couldſt thou have anſwered thine own objection, that the principles of the Sophiſts if general, would be deſtructive of ſociety? Nature has ſufficiently guarded againſt their becoming general.—But, I ſhould appear ridiculous to myſelf, ſhould I attempt to anſwer thy animated apoſtrophe, or to prove, how much thy paſſionate love of virtue can make thee conſider things in a falſe light. Be virtuous, *Callias*; continue to court the applauſe of ſpiritual beings and the favour of heavenly beauties; prepare thyſelf courageouſly to withſtand the misfortunes thy platoniſm will expoſe thee to in this inferior world: and when thou ſeeſt people low minded enough to be ſatisfied with earthly happineſs, comfort thyſelf with the pious thought, that in another life, when it ſhall come to thy turn to be happy, they will be rolling in the flames of *Phlegethon*.

Having ſaid this, *Hippias* aroſe, caſt a look of pity and contempt upon *Agathon* and turned his back upon him; giving him to underſtand by this uſual method of politeneſs to people of his condition, that he was at liberty to retire.

AGATHON.

AGATHON.

BOOK IV.

CHAPTER. I.

Secret Deſigns which Hippias forms againſt Agathon's Virtue.

SOME of our readers will doubtleſs imagine, that *Hippias* in his diſcourſe with *Agathon*, ſuppoſed him to be much more deficient in experience and knowledge of the world, than he could poſſibly be, conſidering what had already happened to him. In vindication, therefore, of the philoſopher, we muſt obſerve, that *Agathon*, for reaſons unknown to us, did not think proper to acquaint him either with his name, or with the

more brilliant part of his hiſtory. The public character he had appeared in at *Athens*, had made his name too generally known all over *Greece* for *Hippias* to be ignorant of it; though ſince his reſidence at *Smyrna*, he gave himſelf little concern about public affairs, which he thought ſufficiently well managed by his friends, or ſcholars. As therefore *Agathon* had carefully concealed every circumſtance which might lead him to ſuſpect that he had never been any thing more than a ſervant in the temple at *Delphos*: ſo *Hippias* had good reaſon to think that he was a perfect novice in the world; ſince neither his turn of thought, nor his behaviour was ſuch, as could induce a man of penetration to entertain a more favourable opinion of him. People of his caſt, indeed, might have lived ten years ſucceſſively in the polite world without getting rid of that ſtiffneſs, which at firſt ſight diſcovers them not to be in their own element there. Much leſs are ſuch men

men capable of elevating themſelves to that noble freedom from the fetters of reaſon, to that wiſe indifference for every thing, which enthuſiaſtic ſouls call ſentiment, and to that delicate refinement of taſte, which ſo advantageouſly diſtinguiſhes the men of the world. Such perſons as theſe can, indeed, make obſervations, but as they are deſtitute of that peculiar inſtinct and ſympathetic ſentiment, by means of which, the men of the world are ſo readily and certainly known to each other; or to expreſs myſelf more clearly, as every thing affects them in a different manner, ſo can they never with their utmoſt pains reſemble them. Such men, while they live in the polite world, inhabit a country wholly unknown to them; where their knowledge is confined to mere conjectures, and their expectations continually diſappointed by unforeſeen accidents, or unexpected revolutions.

Agathon, with all his ſuperior accompliſhments, was ſtill one of the claſs of men juſt mentioned. We need not, therefore, be ſurprized, that notwithſtanding the deep reflections he had made to himſelf upon his converſation with *Hippias*, yet he was far from conjecturing the preſent ſchemes of the Sophiſt, whoſe vanity was more hurt by the ill ſucceſs of his attempt, and by the obſtinacy of this ſingular youth, than he choſe to diſcover. *Hippias*, therefore, with good reaſon, thought, that if *Agathon* was in reality, what he appeared to be, he was a living refutation of his ſyſtem. How is this? ſaid he, talking to himſelf, (which was not his uſual cuſtom) I have lived upwards of forty years in the world, and among an infinite variety of men of all ranks and ſituations, I have not met with one, who did not confirm my ideas of human nature; and ſhall this young man pretend to teach me to have faith in virtue? This can never be; he

he muſt either be an enthuſiaſt, or a hypocrite. Whatever he is, I will detect him.—I have juſt thought of an excellent ſcheme.—I will put him to ſuch a trial, as he will yield to if he is an enthuſiaſt; or will oblige him to drop the maſk, if he is a hypocrite. He has reſiſted the allurements of *Cyane*; this has increaſed his pride and his ſecurity. But this proves nothing. I will put his virtue to a ſtronger proof, and if he comes off victorious, he muſt be a prodigy. I will then diſmiſs my female ſlaves, reſign my houſe to the prieſts of *Cybele* for a temple, retire to the borders of the *Ganges*, and get into ſome hollow tree, where with my eyes ſhut and my head between my knees, I will continue fixed in the ſame poſture, 'till in defiance of all my ſenſes, I ſhall imagine, that I exiſt no more. This was, indeed, a hard vow; but *Hippias* was very well convinced, that he ſhould never be obliged to perform it. To loſe no time therefore, he immedi-

ately ſet about carrying his deſign into execution.

CHAP. II.

Hippias pays a Viſit to a Lady.

THE ladies of *Smyrna* had then a cuſtom, which was better calculated to give a favourable idea of their beauty, than their modeſty. In the warmer months they generally, in the afternoon, went into the temperate bath; and to paſs away the time more agreeably, admitted the viſit of ſuch perſons, as they indulged in the privilege of ſeeing them familiarly at home. This cuſtom was quite as innocent at *Smyrna*, as that of ſome modern ladies of a neighbouring nation, who permit men to viſit them at their toilet; but this indulgence was granted only to particular friends; lovers were totally excluded from it, except

cept in particular inſtances, when the almoſt invincible baſhfulneſs of a young unexperienced novice wanted ſome encouragement. Among the great variety of beauties, who favoured *Hippias* with this privilege, there was one in particular, called *Danae*, remarkably diſtinguiſhed among that claſs of women, who were called by the Greeks female friends, or more properly female members of ſociety. This claſs of ladies was held in the ſame eſtimation among women, as the Sophiſts were among men. They were equally honoured, and might boaſt that the *Aſpaſias*, the *Leontiums*, the *Phrynes*, the moſt complete models of every ſuperior perfection in their own ſex, except in one point, that of rigid virtue, would not have ſcrupled to rank with them. As to *Danae*, the men of *Smyrna* publickly declared it as their opinion, that ſhe excelled in beauty and elegance all the other ladies, whether gay or prudes, virtuous, or devotees. Hiſtory, indeed,

does not inform us whether the ladies were very zealous to confirm this opinion of the men by open conſent; but ſo far, however, is certain, every one of them agreed that excepting one lady, whom they did not chuſe to name, the beautiful *Danae* was as much ſuperior to all other women, as this anonymous fair one was to her. Her fame, indeed, in this reſpect, was ſo well eſtabliſhed, that it gave ſome appearance of probability to the report, that in her early youth ſhe had ſerved as a model for the moſt eminent painters; and that on ſuch an occaſion as this, ſhe had acquired the name, by which ſhe was ſo celebrated in *Ionia*. She was now turned of thirty, and yet the beauties of her perſon were, perhaps, more engaging than before. The dazzling bloom of youth which uſually diſappears with the ſpring of life, was in her replaced by a thouſand other charms, which in the opinion of connoiſſeurs gave her a certain power of attraction, which without

hyperbole,

hyperbole, was in ſome circumſtances irreſiſtible. Notwithſtanding this, the wiſe *Hippias*, under the *Ægis* of that indifference with which at that time he uſually beheld the fineſt women, did not ſcruple to expoſe his virtue frequently to this danger. The beautiful *Danae* conſidered him particularly as a friend, and ſecret hiſtory proceeds to acquaint us, that he had formerly been, for a time, thought worthy of being intruſted with a poſt of greater confidence near her perſon; a favour ſhe uſed only to beſtow on the moſt amiable of his ſex. This was the lady, whoſe aſſiſtance *Hippias* wanted, to carry on his deſign againſt *Agathon*, whoſe enthuſiaſtic virtue, was, in his opinion, ſuch an inſult to his principles, as he was leſs able to put up with, than the moſt ingenious and logical refutation. He, therefore, paid her a viſit at the uſual hour, and he had no ſooner entered the ſaloon, where ſhe was attended in the bath, by two young boys who looked like *Cupids*, than

ſhe

ſhe immediately perceived ſomething in his countenance differing from his uſual ſerenity. "What has happened to thee, *Hippias*, ſaid ſhe to him, that thou haſt ſuch a thoughtful look?" I know not, anſwered he, what ſhould make me look grave, when I come to pay a viſit to a lady who is bathing; but this I know, that I never ſaw thee ſo handſome as thou art this moment. "Well, replied ſhe, this proves the truth of my conjectures. I am certain I appear juſt the ſame to-day, as I did the laſt time thou ſaweſt me; but thy fancy is wound up to a higher pitch than uſual, and thou doſt generouſly aſcribe its influence upon thine eyes, to that of the object before thee: I will engage that the moſt ordinary perſon among my attendants, would, at this inſtant, appear to thee as charming as one of the Graces." I do not pretend, replied *Hippias*, to a more lively imagination than that which animated a *Zeuxis* and an *Aglaophon*, when they looked upon *Danae*

as

as the moſt perfect model of her ſex. What a glorious opportunity, if I were a Jupiter for a new metamorphoſis!— "And what ſhape wouldſt thou aſſume to enable thee at once to remove my bathfulneſs, and deceive thy beloved wife? For I believe there is not a bird, animal or reptile, in the whole creation, which has not been of ſervice to ſome one of the immortals in the ſeduction of ſome virtuous damſel." I ſhould not be long at a loſs, replied *Hippias*; for what form could I poſſibly aſſume more agreeable to thee, or better calculated for my purpoſe, than that of this ſparrow, ſo juſtly an object of jealouſy to thy admirers; when encouraged by the tendereſt expreſſions, he flutters ſo freely upon thy neck, or with his wanton bill pecks at thy beautiful boſom, while the careſſes he receives from thee in return, are always redoubled "It is much eaſier for thee than thou doſt imagine, replied *Danae*, to put the ſparrow in thy place,

place, than to put thyſelf in the place of the ſparrow: thou wouldſt ſoon make the careſſes of my little favourite ſuſpicious to me. But enough of the charms thou doſt aſcribe to my beauty. Let us talk of ſomething elſe. Knoweſt thou that I have diſmiſſed my lover? "What, the beautiful *Hyacinthus?*" The ſame, and what is more, with a firm reſolution, not to admit another in his ſtead. "That, beautiful *Danae*, is a dreadful reſolution." Not ſo much, as thou doſt imagine. I aſſure thee, *Hippias*, my patience was no longer able to bear all the abſurdities of thoſe impertinent coxcombs, who pretend to talk ſentimentally, and yet have no feelings; whoſe hearts are ſcarcely affected, though they talk of torments and flames; who are incapable of loving any thing but themſelves, and who only make uſe of my eyes as a looking glaſs, to admire the importance of their little affected figures. As ſoon as they imagine themſelves entitled to our favour, they think

they

they do us a great deal of honour in ſuffering our careſſes. Every look of their's convinces me, that they conſider me only as a play-thing, and that half of my charms is loſt upon them; becauſe they have no ſoul of their own, to make them ſenſible of the beauties of a ſoul. Thy indignation is juſt, replied the Sophiſt, it is certainly a pity one cannot make theſe creatures comprehend that the ſoul is the moſt amiable part of a fine woman. But, compoſe thyſelf, all men have not ſuch groſs ideas, and I know one, who could not fail of pleaſing thee, if for the ſake of variety thou ſhouldſt be inclined to try a lover of this ſpiritual caſt? "And may one preſume to aſk who he is?" He is a young man, in compariſon of whom all the *Hyacinthuſſes* are meer monkeys; he is more beautiful than *Adonis*.—Fie *Hippias*, that's quite fulſome. Thou canſt not conceive how much I am diſguſted with theſe pretty fellows. O! that has nothing to do with it, I will anſwer for this one.

He

He has none of thoſe faults thou doſt diſlike ſo much in the *Narciſſuſſes* of the age. He ſcarcely ſeems to know that he has a body. He is ſuch a man as hardly can be paralleled; beautiful as *Apollo*, and yet ſpiritualized as a Sylph; a man, who is all ſoul; who would conſider thee, even in thy preſent ſituation, as an immaterial being, and who does every thing in a ſpiritual, which others do in a corporeal manner. Doſt thou underſtand me beautiful *Danae?* "Not entirely, yet I am not the leſs pleaſed with the deſcription. But art thou in earneſt?" Quite ſo: if thou ſhouldſt have a deſire to know what metaphyſical love is, he will exactly ſuit thee. He is more platonic, than *Plato* himſelf.—For if I am not miſtaken thou canſt communicate ſome ſecret intelligence with regard to this famous philoſopher. "Oh! I recollect, anſwered *Danae*, with a ſmile, he once had a little adventure with one of my friends, which however, muſt not

give

give thee a bad opinion of him. For where is there a being ſo ſpiritualized whom a handſome young girl of eighteen would not inſpire with ſome corporeal ſenſations? Still thou doſt miſtake the man, replied *Hippias*, the Goddeſs of *Paphos*, or even thyſelf, would not produce ſuch an effect in him. Thou mayſt ſuffer him to ſtay with thee day and night. Thou mayſt expoſe him to any kind of temptation; thou mayſt even permit him —to ſleep by thy ſide, without his giving thee the opportunity, even to make the leaſt exclamation. In a word, thy virtue may repoſe in great ſecurity by him without the leaſt riſque of being alarmed. "Oh! I now underſtand thee; but there was no need of giving thyſelf the trouble to carry the jeſt ſo far. I am not deſirous of any ſuch lover, who confines himſelf to the admiration of my ſoul, merely becauſe my perſon is of no uſe to him." Thou mayſt be perfectly eaſy upon that point; for the one I recommend

commend to thee, is very far from being one of that ſort. What thou doſt imagine to ariſe from a natural cauſe, is only the effect of his virtue, and of that ſublime philoſophy he profeſſes. " My curioſity is greatly excited to ſee him; but let me tell thee *Hippias*, my vanity would not be ſatisfied with ſuch cool admiration. It is true, I am moſt heartily diſguſted with all theſe mechanical lovers; but I ſhould be equally diſſatisfied with one, who ſhould be perfectly inſenſibly to thoſe attractions, which are the ſole incitements of ſenſibility in the others. A woman always takes a pleaſure in inſpiring deſires, even though ſhe may not be inclined to ſatisfy them. The prude herſelf is not exempt from this foible. What ſignifies it to us, to hear a lover extol our charms? We want to ſee what effect they have upon him. And the greater his underſtanding, ſo much the more flattering is it for our vanity to diſconcert him. No *Hippias*, thou canſt

have

have no conception of the pleaſure we feel, in viewing the abſurdities we make theſe Lords of the creation ſtoop to; it far exceeds any pleaſure they take in the follies they bring us to. To behold a philoſopher languiſhing at my feet like a turtle dove, and who, in order to pleaſe me, curls his hair, trims his beard, and perfumes himſelf with all the ſweets of *Arabia*: To behold, I ſay, ſuch a one, in order to ingratiate himſelf in my favour, talk to my lap dog, and make verſes upon my ſparrow—Oh! *Hippias*, one muſt indeed be a woman to conceive what a pleaſure this is!—I pity thee, replied the ſly Sophiſt, but thou certainly wilt not enjoy this kind of pleaſure with the lover I am ſpeaking of. He has been already tried. His heart is as tender as that of a young ſighing lover; but as I told thee before, the ſouls of beautiful women are the only objects of his tenderneſs; all their other charms make no more impreſſion upon him, than a ſtatue

or a picture. That we ſhall ſee, replied *Danae*; I inſiſt upon it, that he comes with thee this evening: there will only be a ſmall party, which will not confine us. But, who is this perſon we have been ſo long talking about? "He is only a ſlave, whom I purchaſed a few weeks ago from a Cilician pirate, but ſuch a ſlave as was never ſeen before. He was educated in the temple of *Apollo* at *Delphos*, and, probably, may owe his exiſtence to the anti-platonic paſſion of this deity for ſome pretty ſhepherdeſs, who had ventured too far in his laurel groves. He has paſſed a great part of his time at *Athens*, where the eloquent diſcourſes of *Plato* have completed that romantic education, of which he received the firſt principles in the ſacred groves at *Delphos*. He accidentally fell into the hands of ſome Cilician pirates, and from theirs, into mine. His name is *Pythocles*, which, as I diſliked, I changed into that of *Callias*, a name he deſerves, as he is

the

the handſomeſt man I ever ſaw. His other qualifications confirm the favourable opinion his firſt appearance promiſes. He is a man of ſenſe, taſte, and learning; a lover and favourite of the muſes: but with all theſe accompliſhments, he is but a ſtrange being, an enthuſiaſt, and a uſeleſs member of ſociety. His ſingularity he calls virtue, under the notion that virtue muſt be the very reverſe of nature; and the extravagancies of his imagination he looks upon as reaſon; becauſe he has reduced them into a ſyſtem; and flatters himſelf that he is wiſe; becauſe he raves with a kind of methodical regularity. He pleaſed me at firſt ſight, and I reſolved to try if I could make any thing of him; but the pains I have taken have been hitherto unſucceſsful: if there is a poſſibility of reforming him, it can only be accompliſhed by the aſſiſtance of a lady; for I think I have obſerved that the ſureſt way of captivating his underſtanding, is to gain his heart. The attempt, fair

Danae

Danae, is worthy of thee, as it will ſhew, if it does not ſucceed, that he is incorrigible, and only deſerves to be abandoned to his folly and his fate.

THOU haſt fired my ambition, replied the beautiful *Danae*; bring him here this evening; I will then ſee him, and if he is formed of the ſame materials as other men, I will try whether *Danae* is worthy of the title of having been a diſciple of *Aſpaſia*.

Hippias was overjoyed, that the purpoſe of his viſit was ſo happily anſwered, and as he went away, promiſed at the time appointed to bring this wonderful young man; on whom fair *Danae* was deſirous of trying the power of her charms.

CHAP.

CHAP. III.

Hiſtory of the beautiful Danae.

THE lady, whom we have introduced to the acquaintance of our readers in the former chapter, has, probably, not been ſo diſagreeable to many of them, but that they ſhould expect a more circumſtantial account of her character and hiſtory. This expectation of their's we ſhall the more readily comply with, as the ſubſequent part of our hiſtory ſeems to make it neceſſary, that the reader ſhould be enabled to form a true judgment of the fair *Danae*.

IT was the general opinion at *Smyrna*, that ſhe was the daughter of the celebrated *Aſpaſia* of *Miletum*, who in her native country had carried the art of gallantry to ſuch a degree of perfection, by connecting it with the ſtudy of philoſophy and the finer arts, that ſhe might

juſtly be conſidered as the inventreſs of it. *Aſpaſia* afterwards retired to *Athens*, where ſhe exerted her uncommon qualifications with ſuch peculiar addreſs and prudence, that ſhe at laſt gained an abſolute power over the great *Pericles*, who then ruled over all *Greece*; or, as the comic poets of that age expreſs it, ſhe was raiſed to the dignity of being the *Juno* to this Athenian *Jupiter*. But the conjectures, upon which the general opinion of *Danae*'s birth was founded, are not of ſufficient weight to induce us to ſet aſide the teſtimony of ſeveral hiſtorians, who aſſure us, that ſhe was a native of the iſland of *Scios*; and that after having loſt her parents at the age of fourteen, ſhe came with her brother to *Athens*, in order to procure a ſubſiſtence by her accompliſhments, in a city where all agreeable talents met with ſo favourable a reception. The art, which ſhe here profeſſed, was a kind of pantomine dance, which generally required one or two perſons, who

who repreſented, by certain geſtures and attitudes accompanied with the muſic of a flute or lyre, ſome piece ſelected either from the Grecian mythology, or from the hiſtory of one of their heroes. But, as this art, on account of the number of thoſe who profeſſed it, was not ſufficient to ſupport her, ſhe found herſelf under a neceſſity of ſerving as a model for the Athenian artiſts. Beſides the profit ſhe derived from hence, ſhe enjoyed the flattering honour of ſeeing herſelf placed upon the altars, either as a *Diana* or a *Venus*, and becoming an object of admiration among the connoiſſeurs, and of adoration among the people. It happened, one day, as ſhe was ſetting for a model of the Acriſian *Danae*, that ſhe was ſurprized by the young *Alcibiades*, and appeared ſo charming to him, that he thought no man inferior to himſelf ſhould be indulged in the ſight of ſo much beauty. On the other hand, the young *Danae* was ſo ſtruck with the

figure, behaviour, rank and fortune of this lovely ſeducer, that he eaſily perſuaded her to put herſelf under his protection. He conducted her to the houſe of *Aſpaſia*, which was then the rendezvous of all the Athenian wits, and a kind of female academy, in which young ladies of the moſt agreeable accompliſhments, under the inſpection of ſo perfect a miſtreſs, received an education, which qualified them to entertain the great and wiſe men of the ſtate in their hours of leiſure and retirement. *Danae* improved ſo much theſe opportunities, that ſhe ſoon became the favourite, and at length the confidant of *Aſpaſia*, who far ſuperior to the mean jealouſy of common ſouls, ſaw herſelf live again in the perſon of this young beauty, with ſo much ſatisfaction, that the affection ſhe had for her, probably, gave riſe to the report before mentioned. In the mean time *Alcibiades* alone reaped the fruit of this education, by which the natural accompliſh-

accompliſhments of his lovely friend were brought to ſuch perfection, that ſhe acquired the name of the ſecond *Aſpaſia*; and the beautiful *Danae* impoſed it upon herſelf as a duty, to obſerve the ſtricteſt fidelity towards him, which he did not think it neceſſary to return. As the love of variety was a far ſtronger paſſion in him, than that which any woman could inſpire; ſo *Danae*, after having for a conſiderable time maintained the firſt place in his affections, was at length obliged to yield to ſome other favourite, who had no advantage over her, but novelty. However weak the heart of *Danae* might be in ſome reſpects, it was not leſs noble in others. She loved *Alcibiades*, becauſe ſhe admired his perſon and his qualities, and therefore took little care to ſecure herſelf any advantages from his fortune. The bare remembrance of having been loved by the moſt amiable man of his time, was all ſhe would have retained of her connection with him,

had he not been as noble and generous, as ſhe, contrary to the uſual cuſtom of ladies of her caſt, was diſintereſted. I leave thee, *Danae*, ſaid he to her, but I will not ſuffer her, who has once been the favourite of *Alcibiades*, ever to be under the neceſſity of yielding to the richeſt man, what ſhould only belong to the moſt amiable. In ſaying this, he forced her to accept of a ſum, which was more than ſufficient to free her from any apprehenſions of that nature. The death of *Aſpaſia*, and the changes conſequent upon it, induced her to quit *Athens* in a few years; and after ſome adventures, in which her heart had no ſmall ſhare, ſhe at laſt fixed upon *Smyrna* for her conſtant reſidence. Here ſhe became acquainted with the younger *Cyrus*, whoſe excellent qualities, the pen of a *Xenophon* have rendered as well known, as the unfortunate event of that enterprize, by which he thought to raiſe himſelf to the throne of the firſt

Cyrus.

Cyrus. The firſt ſight of her captivated the heart of this prince, who was ſo ſenſible of the force of thoſe charms, by which the ſcholars of *Aſpaſia* were ſo eminently diſtinguiſhed from thoſe living ſtatues, deſtined in eaſtern countries for the pleaſures of the great; and which, conſidering the only uſe that is made of them, ſeem to have little occaſion for a ſoul. But, however flattering this conqueſt was to her, ſhe could not be prevailed upon to accompany him to *Sardis*, and ſacrifice her freedom to the honour of being the firſt of his ſlaves. She continued, therefore, at *Smyrna*; and *Cyrus*, who would not be ſurpaſſed in generoſity by any Athenian, rewarded her ſo liberally, that ſhe had nothing to think of, but how ſhe might ſpend her time moſt agreeably. She made uſe of this fortune ſo as to keep up the character of a ſecond *Aſpaſia*. Her houſe had the appearance of a temple of the Muſes, and Graces; and if love was not baniſhed from ſuch an ami-

able ſociety, it was ſuch a love, as *Anacreon* deſcribes, bound by the Muſes with garlands of flowers, and ſo well pleaſed with theſe chains, that *Venus* in vain perſuades him to ſet himſelf free from them. Pleaſure, laughter and joy, (to uſe *Homer*'s phraſe, common language being too weak to expreſs it) with the ſmiling hours continually danced around her; and ſorrow, care and diſguſt, with all other enemies of tranquility and pleaſure, were baniſhed from this place of feſtivity.

I imagine, we have ſaid more than is ſufficient to make our readers very anxious for the virtue of our hero. In fact, he was never before in any circumſtances, from which we had leſs reaſon to flatter ourſelves of his being able to extricate himſelf. The danger he had been expoſed to from the voluptuous *Pythia*, from the frantic Bacchanals, and in the houſe of the ſage *Hippias*, which ſo much reſembled *Circe*'s ſty, ſcarce deſerves to be mentioned

mentioned in compariſon of thoſe temptations we ſhall ſoon ſee him ſurrounded with. We ſhould indeed gladly have made him ſuperior to them, had the duties of an hiſtorian allowed us to be partial to our hero at the expence of truth.

CHAP. IV.

How dangerous it is to have an imagination which embelliſhes every thing.

A Lively imagination ſupplies the perſon who is poſſeſſed of it, with an infinite variety of pleaſures, denied to all other mortals. If its magic power heightens the charms of every beautiful object, and tranſports him into a kind of extaſy, while others have ſcarce any feeling at all; if in proſperity it makes him conſider this world as a paradiſe, and in adverſity, draws off his mind from the conſideration of his miſery, by diſcover-

ing to him other worlds, which, in the delightful proſpect of future felicity, ſuſpend his affliction; it muſt on the other hand be confeſſed, that a lively imagination is no leſs the ſource of error, of extravagance, and of anxiety, which even by the aſſiſtance of wiſdom, and with the moſt ardent love of virtue we cannot get rid of, till we have found ſome means of enabling us to moderate the too great vivacity of the cauſe of them. To ſay the truth, the ſage *Hippias* was not much in the wrong, in aſcribing to our hero ſuch an imagination; though we cannot fully approve of the means, which he fancied beſt adapted to keep it in a proper equilibrium with the other faculties of his ſoul. The artful *Danae* had from *Hippias*'s deſcription conceived ſuch an idea of *Agathon*, as to think herſelf ſure of ſucceſs, if ſhe could but engage his imagination in her favour. She thought *Hippias* had failed, by endeavouring to work upon his ſenſes only. Upon this ſuppoſition

ſhe

ſhe had formed to herſelf a plan, with which ſhe was perfectly ſatisfied; for ſhe was as far from thinking that the execution of it would coſt her her heart, as *Agathon* was from ſuſpecting that any ſnare was laid for his. At length the hour of *Hippias's* appointment arrived, and *Agathon* accompanied his maſter, without knowing where he was going. They entered a palace ſupported by a double row of Ionic pillars, and ornamented with a great variety of ſtatues richly gilt. The inſide of this houſe anſwered to the magnificence of its outward appearance. Every where he met with a buſy croud of male and female ſlaves, all of them of uncommon beauty; among the males there was not one above twelve years of age. Their dreſſes preſented an agreeable mixture of uniformity and variety. Some were clothed in white, ſome in azure, ſome in pink, and ſome in other colours, which all ſeemed to point out the particular offices of the ſlaves who

wore them. *Agathon*, upon whom every thing made a more lively impreſſion, than it ought conſiſtently with the rule of right of moraliſts, was ſo inchanted with what he ſaw, that he fancied himſelf tranſported into one of his ideal worlds. He had ſcarce time to recover himſelf, when *Hippias* introduced him into a large, illuminated ſaloon, where the company they were to meet was aſſembled. He had hardly caſt his eyes around, when *Danae* with a grace and politeneſs peculiar to herſelf came towards him, and aſſured him that a friend of *Hippias* had a right to conſider himſelf as at home in her houſe, and in this company. A compliment ſo obliging certainly deſerved an anſwer, but *Agathon* at that time was not in a ſituation to return it. A look expreſſive of the higheſt degree of agreeable ſurpriſe was the only reply he could give. The company he found aſſembled there, conſiſted only of ſuch perſons, as were intimate

mate with each other: and were as much diſtinguiſhed, as *Danae* herſelf, by that attic urbanity, which is ſo very different from the formal, ceremonious complaiſance of our preſent Europeans. Had *Agathon* been introduced in a polite modern circle, on his firſt entrance he would have given occaſion for an infinite number of ill-natured and ſatirical reflections; but here a tranſient look was all he had to ſuſtain. The converſation was continued, no one whiſpered another in the ear, no one ſeemed to obſerve his ſurpriſe, nor to take notice that his eyes were rivetted upon the beautiful *Danae*. In a word, the company allowed him ſufficient time to recover himſelf, if ſuch an expreſſion is proper to convey an idea of his ſituation all that evening. It will, probably, be expected, that we ſhould give a more accurate deſcription of this extraordinary impreſſion, which *Danae* made upon our amiable hero; but we confeſs ourſelves unable to

ſatisfy

ſatisfy the curioſity of our readers in this particular, of which *Agathon* himſelf has never yet been able to give a proper account. We can, however, aſſure them of this, that *Danae* had never in appearance leſs reaſon to expect ſhe ſhould make ſuch an impreſſion: ſo little pains had ſhe taken to ſet off her charms in the moſt advantageous manner by any artificial ornaments. Her whole dreſs conſiſted of a gown of white ſilk taffety with ſmall purple ſtripes, and in her black hair was placed a half blown roſe. This, indeed, was ſo widely different from the tranſparent dreſs of *Cyane*, which had diſguſted *Agathon*, that one might with greater propriety have found fault with its concealing too much. 'Tis true, ſhe took care that a little delicate foot, whiter than alabaſter, ſhould now and then be diſplayed, and whenever this charming foot appeared, all the exquiſite beauties of her countenance were not capable of drawing *Agathon's* attention from

from it. But this, and a hand whiter than ſnow, with part of an arm moſt perfectly beautiful, were all that the envious garment did not conceal from the eye of curioſity. The perſon and behaviour of *Danae* would not have led any one to ſuſpect in the leaſt what paſſed in her heart; or to diſcover that ſhe had any particular deſign upon our hero: nor did ſhe once ſeem to perceive, whether from inattention or modeſty, that his eyes were ſolely fixed upon her, and that all his other ſenſes were abſorbed in the contemplation of her perſon.

CHAP. V.

Pantomines.

WHEN ſupper was ended, at which *Agathon* had been little more than a ſpectator, a male and young female dancer entered, who to the accompaniment of two flutes, repreſent-

ed

ed the ſtory of *Apollo* and *Daphne* in a dance. The whole company was delighted with the ſkill of the dancers; they were all life and expreſſion, ſo that one would have imagined they ſpoke what they only acted. How do you like this dancing girl, *Callias*, ſaid *Danae* to *Agathon*, who ſeemed to pay but little attention to the entertainment, and the only perſon in company, who had not obſerved that the girl was remarkably handſome, and wore as tranſparent a dreſs as *Cyane?* I am of opinion, replied *Agathon*, who now began to conſider her more attentively, that probably, from too earneſt a deſire of pleaſing, ſhe has miſtaken the character. Why, in her flight, does ſhe look behind her? And with a look too, which ſeems to reproach her purſuer, that he is not ſwifter than ſhe? Well, very well (exclaimed he at that part of the repreſentation, where *Daphne* implores the aſſiſtance of the river God) moſt excellent! How ſhe changes

changes in the midſt of her ſupplication! How pale ſhe grows! How ſhe trembles! Her feet ſeem to take root with a motion which inſpires one with terror; in vain would ſhe draw back her expanded arms. —But, why that look of tenderneſs ſhe caſts upon her lover? Why thoſe tears which ſeem condenſed in her eye? This queſtion of *Agathon's*, was anſwered by a general ſmile. At laſt one of the company ſaid, thou doſt find fault with the very circumſtance we moſt admire. An ordinary dancer, would never have been able to make herſelf liable to thy cenſure. It is impoſſible to give more ſpirit, more delicacy, and a more ſtriking contraſt to this character, than the little *Pſyche* has done, for ſo was the dancing girl called. *Daphne* herſelf was not more aſtoniſhed, when ſhe began to perceive her metamorphoſis, than *Agathon* was, the inſtant he heard the name of *Pſyche*. He tried to ſpeak, but could not go on, he bluſhed, and his confuſion was ſo viſible, that *Danae* imputing

puting it to his being aſhamed of the cenſure he had paſſed upon the dance, thought it neceſſary to endeavour to relieve him. The cenſure of *Callias*, replied *Danae*, is a proof that he is as ſenſible as *Phœdrias*, of the ſpirit with which *Pſyche* executed her part, and for that reaſon his cenſure is probably not the leſs founded. *Pſyche* ſhould have acted the character of *Daphne*, but ſhe has only repreſented her own. Is it not ſo *Pſyche*? Thou didſt only think, how thou wouldſt have acted, hadſt thou been in *Daphne's* place? And how could I have done otherwiſe, Madam, replied the little dancer? Thou ſhouldſt have aſſumed, ſaid *Danae*, the character which the poets have given her, but thou haſt been ſatisfied with placing thyſelf in her ſituation. What then was her character, replied *Pſyche?* That of a prude, ſaid the ſage *Hippias*, the favourite character of *Callias*. This excited in the good *Agathon* another bluſh. Thou haſt miſ-

miſunderſtood me, ſaid he to the Sophiſt. The character of *Daphne*, according to my ideas, ſhould be indifference and innocence, both which ſhe might have without being a prude. *Pſyche* is the more entitled to our applauſe, replied *Phædrias*, (to whom, as hiſtory informs us, ſhe was ſomething more than a dancing girl) as ſhe has embelliſhed the character ſhe had to repreſent. The conteſt between love and honour requires more genius to imitate, and is more alluring to the ſpectator than that indifference, which *Callias* would give her. And beſides, where is the nymph, who could be indifferent to the love of ſo beautiful a deity as *Apollo*? I agree with thee, replied *Hippias*, *Daphne* flies from *Apollo*, becauſe ſhe is a young virgin, and for this reaſon ſhe ſecretly wiſhes, he would overtake her. Why does ſhe ſo often look behind her, unleſs to reproach him with his want of ſwiftneſs? The moment he comes up ſo cloſe to her, that ſhe

cannot

cannot eſcape him, ſhe entreats the river God, to transform her! A mere farce! If ſhe was in earneſt, why did ſhe not throw herſelf into the river? She acted with propriety, when ſhe implored the aſſiſtance of the river God; this was in character. But then, who could have conceived, that he would have been ſo ready to hear her? And when could ſhe have been leſs deſirous of it, than at the moment ſhe found herſelf in the longing arms of her lover? Had ſhe run herſelf out of breath for any other reaſon, than that he might the more eaſily overtake her? What then can be more natural, than the anger, grief and uneaſineſs ſhe expreſſes in her whole appearance, when, upon ſtretching out her arms to embrace him, ſhe finds them hardened into laurel branches? Even the look of tenderneſs itſelf is natural, as the diſſimulation ceaſes immediately upon her being transformed. Has not all this been ſtrongly and naturally expreſſed in *Pſyche's* manner?

It

It is the character of a young nymph, at leaſt of one of thoſe kinds of young nymphs, my dear *Callias*, we generally meet with in this material world. I ſubmit, replied *Agathon*; the dancing girl has done every thing that could be required of her, and I was ridiculous to expect, that ſhe ſhould have executed the idea, my imagination has formed of a *Daphne*. *Agathon* had ſcarcely uttered this, when *Danae*, without ſaying a word, roſe up, and making a ſign to the young dancing girl, went out of the room with her. A ſhort time after, the dancers returned, the muſic began again, and the pantomine of *Apollo* and *Daphne* was repeated. But, how great was *Agathon*'s ſurprize, when he ſaw *Danae* herſelf in the dreſs of the young dancing girl, repreſenting the character of *Daphne*. Poor *Agathon!* too lovely *Danae!* who could have expected it? Every accurately expreſſed through out the whole the peculiar idea of *Agathon*, but with a grace, with a charm, his imagination

nation had not the leaſt conception of. The ſenſations of his mind were at this inſtant ſo lively, that he in vain endeavoured to turn his eyes from this too inchanting object; an irreſiſtible impulſe brought them back again. How noble, how graceful were all her motions! With what affecting ſimplicity did ſhe expreſs the innocence of the character! His eyes were ſtill fixed with ſilent extaſy, on the ſpot, where ſhe was changed into the laurel, when ſhe inſtantly diſappeared without waiting for the applauſes of the ſpectators, who could not find words to expreſs the pleaſure they had received from this unexpected proof of her talents. In a few minutes ſhe returned to the company in her own dreſs. How greatly is *Callias* obliged to thee, beautiful *Danae*, ſaid *Phædrias* addreſſing himſelf to her, as ſhe came into the room. Thou only couldſt juſtify his criticiſm; thy charms alone were powerful enough to make even prudiſhneſs agreeable. How

deplorable

deplorable would have been the fate of an *Apollo*, who ſhould have had thee for a *Daphne*. Fortunately for our hero, he was ſo loſt in the contemplation of the beautiful *Danae*, whilſt this obſervation, accompanied with a ſignificant look, was made, that he did not hear it; or elſe it would certainly have coſt him another bluſh. The praiſe of *Danae*, and a diſſertation on the art of dancing was the ſubject of converſation during the reſt of the evening; a diſſertation which our readers will excuſe us from communicating, in conſideration of our gratifying their curioſity with more intereſting circumſtances. We cannot, however, omit mentioning, that upon this occaſion *Agathon* became as eloquent, as he had before been penſive and ſilent; a chearful ſerenity enlivened his whole countenance, and his wit had never before appeared ſo brilliant and entertaining. He attracted the applauſe of all the company, and the beautiful *Danae* herſelf, could

could not help now and then viewing him with pleaſure and ſatisfaction; while his eyes, now ſeldom drawn off from her, expreſſed ſomething, we have, in vain, endeavoured to find a name for in human language.

CHAP. VI.

Secret Intelligence.

OUR friend *Plutarch* has obſerved, that trifling occurrences frequently become remarkable by the conſequences that attend them; that the moſt inconſiderable actions often give us opportunities of penetrating deeper into the human heart, than thoſe more important ones, for which, as they are to be ſubmitted to the judgment of the public, we uſually take ſome pains to prepare ourſelves. The ſtability of this obſervation has induced us to be ſo circumſtantial in the deſcription we have given of the pantomine

pantomine in the preceding chapter: and hope to juſtify ourſelves entirely in this particular by adding to this account ſome particulars relating to the amiable *Pſyche*, who, in the firſt book has already been juſt introduced to the reader's acquaintance. This *Pſyche* was the only one, among all thoſe beings which are the objects of the ſenſes (and a limitation we have reaſon for making, however ſtrange it may ſound to an antiplatonic ear) who had, till now maintained the firſt place in his affections. Since he had been ſeparated from her, he had not ſeen any woman, whoſe charms, at the bare remembrance of his *Pſyche*, did not loſe all their influence on his heart as well as his ſenſes; the emotions of which, whatever ſome romance writers may ſuppoſe, do not always correſpond with each other. To ſay the truth, this was not to be attributed to that heroic fidelity and conſtancy in love, which thoſe writers conſider as a virtue of the firſt claſs: *Pſyche*

had ſtill maintained herſelf in his heart, becauſe the remembrance of her was more pleaſing to him, than all the impreſſions, which other female beauties had made upon him, or becauſe, he had not yet ſeen any woman, who pleaſed him ſo well. The experience of a few years, had perſuaded him that he ſhould never change, and from hence, probably, aroſe his ſurpriſe, when he ſaw in the beautiful *Danae*, a degree of perfection, beyond what his imagination could poſſibly ſuggeſt to him in this world. He had not been *Agathon*, if this appearance had failed to inſpire him with thoſe tranſports we have before deſcribed. No one, in his opinion, had united in ſo high a degree, and in ſuch an uncommonly agreeable manner all thoſe more refined beauties, with which vulgar ſouls are not capable of being affected. Her figure, her look, her ſmile, her attitudes, her gait, all had that perfection which the poets uſually aſcribe to the Goddeſſes.

deſſes. We need not be ſurprized, therefore, that for ſome hours he could only behold and admire, and that his enraptured mind was not at liberty to pay any attention to his own ſituation. In fact, all his faculties were ſo much abſorbed, that during this whole interval, contrary to his uſual cuſtom, he remembered no more of *Pſyche*, than if ſhe had never exiſted. But as ſoon as the female dancer who repreſented the part of *Daphne* appeared, he immediately perceived a reſemblance which ſhe bore to *Pſyche*, both in her countenance and figure; and the image of his beloved miſtreſs inſenſibly preſented itſelf to his view. His imagination, by an uſual mechanical effect ſubſtituted *Pſyche* in the place of this *Daphne*, and the reaſon he found ſo much fault with her was, becauſe the compariſon ſoon diſcovered the deception of the firſt view, or becauſe ſhe was not *Pſyche* herſelf. However common theſe ſportings of the imagination are, we ſel-

dom perceive clearly the influence they have upon our judgment and inclinations. *Agathon* himſelf, who from his earlieſt infancy had made it his buſineſs to ſearch out the ſecret ſprings of his inward feelings, did not upon this occaſion obſerve what paſſed in his imagination. But as ſoon as the name of *Pſyche*, that name, whoſe ſound was muſic to his ears, was pronounced, he ſtarted, and was thrown into a confuſion of ideas, which he himſelf would have had ſome difficulty to deſcribe, if we may preſume to form any judgment from the peculiar obſcurity of the original in this place. Whatever might be the real cauſe of his aſtoniſhment, it is nevertheleſs certain, he was far from ſuſpecting that his heart which had before been wholly occupied by *Pſyche* alone, now, perhaps, began to be alarmed with the apprehenſion of a rival. His ſelf-illuſion, if it was ſuch, was the more excuſable, as that dear name, had really awakened all his tenderneſs

derneſs in a few moments. He now firſt perceived the reſemblance there was between the two *Pſyches*, and compared them together with a prejudice ſo much in favour of the abſent one, as made the other appear only a ſhadow to her. We are not, indeed, certain, whether this lively recollection of our Hero, might not ultimately have been injurious to *Danae* herſelf, had ſhe not, by a kind of divination, conjectured what was paſſing in his mind, and fortunately hit upon the expedient of putting herſelf in the place of the young dancer, and repreſenting the character *Agathon* had conceived of his ideal *Daphne*, which the pliableneſs of her diſpoſition made her ſo readily and ſo happily enter into. She could not poſſibly have ſerved both the *Pſyches* a worſe trick. Both were eclipſed by her ſtriking luſtre, as the neighbouring ſtars by the full moon. And how could the image of his abſent *Pſyche* any longer employ his thoughts, when all the faculties

ties of his ſoul, fixed upon this enchanting object alone, ſeemed ſcarce ſufficient to perceive its whole perfection? She appeared to him as the moral *Venus* ſurrounded with all her heavenly Graces, while he had never conſidered *Pſyche* as more than the reſemblance of her.

We know not whether it might be neceſſary to be a *Hippias*, in order to believe that certain beauties not quite ſo immaterial as this *Venus*, though equally perfect in their kind, had not contributed more than *Agathon* was aware of, to the extaſy by which he was tranſported into this ideal world, during the performance of the pantomine. The becoming habit of a nymph, which this dance required, was extremely proper to diſplay thoſe charms in the ſtrongeſt manner, and with the greateſt variety: It muſt be allowed that *Venus* herſelf could not have ſubmitted to the moſt penetrating eye, with greater certainty of applauſe, than the irreproachable *Danae* might have done in that

that dreſs, even to the eyes of a rival. The character of unaffected innocence received a ſtill more lively expreſſion, from her incomparable imitation of it: An expreſſion ſo ſtriking that any other perſon but *Agathon*, would have been in danger of loſing his own innocence by it. Indeed, the reſt of the ſpectators had difficulty enough to reſtrain themſelves from playing the part of *Apollo* in earneſt, but *Danae* had nothing of this kind to fear from our Hero, and ſhe found that *Hippias* had not ſaid too much of him. The material beauties, which he did not clearly diſtinguiſh, becauſe they were blended in his eyes with the immaterial excellencies, increaſed to the higheſt degree the vivacity of his ſenſations; the nature of which could not however be changed. His ideas were never in all his life, more pure, more refined, and more ſpiritualized. In ſhort, however contradictory it may appear to thoſe groſs and ſenſual beings, who ſee nothing but the

the woman, in the moſt perfect female form; it is yet certain, that a *Danae* with a figure and in a dreſs, which (to uſe *Hippias*'s expreſſion) might have tempted ſpirits themſelves to aſſume a body, had changed this extraordinary youth into as perfect a ſpiritual being, as has ever been ſeen on this ſide, or perhaps on the other ſide of the moon.

END OF VOL. I.